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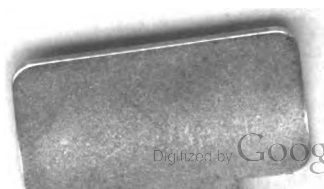
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CONGREGATIONAL HISTORY.

1200—1567.

By JOHN WADDINGTON, D.D.

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PREFACE.

A BRIEF explanation of the special object of the present volume is almost necessary to prepare the reader for its perusal. It must be understood at the outset that the history it contains is not so much that of a religious denomination as of the development of the principles denominated Congregational. Beginning with the darkest period of ecclesiastical history, my aim has been to show the gradual restoration of the Church as a divine institution to its primitive purity and simplicity. With the absolute dominion of the Papacy, the light of evangelical truth, if not extinguished, was greatly obscured. Manuscript copies of the Scriptures, nevertheless, were preserved, and in due time multiplied for more general circulation. The devout study of the Word of God called into existence various fraternities or religious associations, indicating a growing desire for the fellowship springing out of the sympathies sure to be enkindled by a common love of evangelical truth. In due time

remarkable preparations were made in the events of providence, and in the employment simultaneously of different agencies for securing a pure text of the original Scriptures, freed from the accretions or inaccuracies caused by the ignorance, carelessness, or neglect of transcribers. Translations of the Bible were then made into the vernacular by men of suitable culture, and trained in a special manner for their peculiar work. As the light of divine revelation became more widely diffused, the corruptions of the Romish Church were vividly disclosed, and the work of Reformation commenced slowly at first, and with many checks and hindrances, but to be followed with decisive and permanent results. Throughout the entire period brought under review, and in all the vicissitudes of the momentous conflict, an under current of opinion formed by the silent teaching of the Word of God, may be distinctly traced. The light of Congregational principles gleams forth at intervals in the most unexpected manner, and Christian people drawn together by the force of kindred affection, we find meeting together for mutual instruction and united worship, apart from the parochial congregations of the National Church. The controversies agitated by the Reformers directed popular attention to questions of Church polity, and as they were now freely discussed, there was a gradual approximation to the pattern given in the New Testament. The leaders of the Reformation fettered by the exigencies of their position, and more or less warped by their political alliances afforded no encouragement to inquiry in this direc-

tion. Voluntary associations of Christian believers in separate and independent churches were sternly opposed. Uniformity was persistently enforced by pains and penalties. The question of religious liberty was in consequence raised, and notwithstanding many apparent defeats the witnesses for freedom steadily advanced. The sincere convictions of the people were found to be irrepressible, and as they became deeper and purer, the spirit of meek endurance was manifested, accompanied with the disposition to rely only on the force of truth. They became in the extremity of their weakness "more than conquerors." Eventually a company of Christian people, few in number, feeble in resources, and bitterly opposed by the great ecclesiastical parties of their time, resolved to organize a Congregational Church, and for the sake of Christ and the Gospel to accept the penal consequences of such a step. Their example was followed by an unbroken succession of martyrs and confessors until churches of the same order were permanently established and publicly recognized. Such is a very brief epitome of the historical investigation, the results of which I have ventured to submit to the candid attention of those who may be interested in the subject.

The range of inquiry in relation to persons and events to which I have been led is so extensive, that within the limits of a single volume I could attempt little more than to give a lucid outline. Yet having in many respects to break up new ground, and in anticipation of keen scrutiny or hostile criticism, I have felt it necessary, at certain stages of the investigation, to enter somewhat

minutely into detail, and to furnish documentary evidence to an extent that to some readers may become a little wearisome. I entertain the hope, nevertheless, that, from the moral interest of the subject, others will examine the proofs given, with the patience necessary to a well-grounded conviction. It is certainly our duty, if we value congregational principles, to make ourselves clearly acquainted with the course of their development in the history of our country. No educated Congregationalist can feel flattered by the ecclesiastical genealogy that takes its rise from Robert Browne. From the earliest times, wherever the Bible has been devoutly read, we shall find, after full inquiry, that there have been some to act consistently from the strength of their religious convictions, and to form themselves into small bands, that were essentially Christian Churches, though not so in name. "In the year 1159," we are told by the chronicler Newburgh, "there appeared in England a band of strangers, consisting of about thirty persons of both sexes. Gerard, their pastor, is acknowledged to have been a man of learning. In the presence of the council he spake for his followers, stating, in reply to various questions, that *they were Christians, and attached to the doctrines of the apostles*. By the policy or passion of Henry II., they were doomed to be branded in the forehead, to be publicly whipped through the city, and to be cut off from the charities of social life. Gerard passed at the head of his disciples, who, under the tortures inflicted by the lash, joined him in singing, 'Blessed are ye when men shall revile you, and persecute

you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely for my sake.' " *

Facts of this kind assuredly do not stand alone, and if the proper exploration were made, much would be brought to light that we now little anticipate. The present work, therefore, must be considered only as part of a great subject that needs to be more perfectly unfolded. There should be, for example, an exhaustive inquiry into the causes which led to the gradual departure from the primitive model of Church polity, and, subsequently, to the moral eclipse of the thirteenth century. The progress of Congregationalism, on the other hand, for the last three centuries in the countries where the English language is spoken, should be clearly shown. Work of this nature, it should be understood, however, involves an amount of care, toil, and expense that none can properly estimate, but those who have made a similar attempt to fathom the depth of an obscure and too much neglected history.

The public attention now given to ecclesiastical questions renders work of this nature more necessary. As in the reign of Elizabeth three parties are directing their efforts to obtain the emoluments and the influence of the National Establishment. These aspirants for ecclesiastical ascendancy differ in their principles from the Churchmen of the sixteenth century, but there is the same intense rivalry. The *Rationalistic* party, arrogant and self-sufficient, make no secret of their practical aim. The Church, in their view, consists simply of "*men*" united together as a

* Vaughan's Life of Wycliffe.

“factory of philanthropy.”* They propose as far as possible to abolish dogmas, or definite statements of Christian doctrine. “The obvious policy” in order to “clerical liberty,” they say, would be to frame, in the first instance, articles of belief as comprehensive as possible, to impose the acceptance of them as the condition of holding benefices, but to retain the power of modifying them from time to time, whenever modification became necessary for the preservation or the increase of the Church. “The majority of our own nation might become Unitarian, and in that case it should be lawful for a beneficed cleric to question the Godhead of Christ.” “The policy is summed up, in the one word comprehension. The State must make the Church as national as possible. The question, whether dogmas are to be retained or abandoned, restrictions preserved or removed, the definite toned down into the indefinite, must be settled by the consideration, which decision will command the widest assent? In actual fact the policy of the State will always be anti-dogmatic; that the whole tendency of modern civilization is from dogmatism towards rationalism; that is, from artificial belief to natural belief, is an indisputable fact.”† The success of this policy in Germany has been complete. Recently Schenkel said, “We have done away with the ‘Pope of Rome,’ let us now get rid of the ‘Pope in the Bible.’” That the Church should have a distinctively Christian character is extremely repugnant to their ideas. In a recent leading article of the *Times*, the writer says: “It is the peculiar distinction, if not the

* *Essays on Church Policy*, p. 161.

† *Ibid.*, pp. 113, 114.

peculiar glory, of the English Church, that *any Englishman* is a member of it who claims the privileges of membership. There is a second form of ecclesiastical government not hierarchical, but still oligarchical. According to it a strict line of demarcation is drawn between the Gentiles of the outer and the faithful of the inner court. It prevails among the congregational bodies of England, with whom the professors are the governing power, though acting in matters of routine through their delegates, the 'deacons.' Sectarians in the English Church have at times proposed the establishment of an *odious distinction* precisely similar within it, and the change has, we believe, been made in some of our colonies by setting apart the 'communicants,' as the 'professors' of the Episcopal sect. But the English Establishment knows nothing of these distinctions."

We may anticipate, therefore, that one of the first changes in the proposed Church Reformation of the Rationalistic school will be the abolition of the XIXth Article of the Church of England, which states that "the visible Church of Christ is a congregation of *faithful men*." Dr. Harold Browne, Lord Bishop of Ely, in his exposition says: "In our Article the word *Church* is interpreted congregation, probably because such is the original meaning of the word, and such is its application many times in Scripture. The Church is called 'a congregation of *faithful men*,' *cœtus fidelium*, because those of whom the Church is composed are the professed believers in Jesus Christ, that body of people, 'first called Christians in Antioch'" (Acts xi. 25).

The *Ritualistic* party openly avow their intention to reduce the Anglican Church to its state prior to the Reformation, and to substitute ceremonialism for the simplicity of Christian worship and scriptural teaching, for which the Protestant martyrs shed their blood. They retain their position in the Reformed Church tenaciously, to render it a training school for the Church of Rome. The *Evangelical* party occupy a position of difficulty and peril. It is instructive to observe here and there the indirect recognition by them of the scriptural order necessary to secure purity of communion and spiritual freedom. "Practically," they say, "we have no diaconate."* "We have no longer even the shadow of Church discipline." "All Church parties are at the present moment in a state of flux." "When men in our midst come out in our front and tell us that it is their object to claim a place in the English Church, for what most Englishmen hoped they had got rid of for ever at the Reformation, it is preposterous to talk about persecution or illiberality, because we try to ascertain by a solemn legal decision how far such innovations are justifiable. We have a plain right to know what sort of company we are to keep for the future, and if we are really reformed or not. But I suspect that there must be a deal of hard fighting before the question is settled. We shall not so easily get rid of these daring innovations; and we *are assuredly at the edge of a crisis* which, unless there is unusual skill and firmness on the part of our ecclesiastical rulers, must sooner or later end in disruption of some kind."†

* "Principles at Stake."

† *Contemporary Review*, August, 1868.

It must be borne in mind that these conflicting parties severally claim the emoluments, power, and patronage of a State Church. Ecclesiastical questions of necessity must occupy the attention of Parliament. They will be discussed more or less by every periodical journal in the country. The opportunity should not be neglected at such time to give a clear and dispassionate historical statement of the principles which we regard as conducive to peace, order, progress, and true religious freedom.

The first chapters of this work, I fear, will not prove inviting. In setting out on a journey before daybreak, the chilliness in the atmosphere, and the mantle of obscurity cast over every surrounding object, render the path irksome and cheerless. So it is in beginning the narration abruptly with the "Zenith of the Papacy." But there is no help for it. Brilliant writers of historic fiction can open their story in the most enchanting manner, but those who have to deal strictly with facts must accept them in the form in which they happen to be presented.

In concluding these words of "Preface," it gives me sincere pleasure to record my grateful sense of the kindness of personal friends, who in various ways have favoured me with their generous co-operation. The facilities afforded for historical research at the Rolls Office, the British Museum, and Dr. Williams' library, are all that can be desired. I am especially indebted to Samuel Rigby, Esq., Benjamin Scott, Esq., the Chamberlain of London, Joshua Wilson, Esq., Joseph Thompson, Esq., George Whitley, Esq., Rev. Thomas Binney, Dr. Frederick

Tomkins, and other friends who have taken friendly interest in the promotion of the work ; and not least to the subscribers who have encouraged me by their confidence and help.

I cannot entertain the hope that this first attempt to bring the period selected under historical review will be free from defect ; but I trust that my friends will have proof of conscientious diligence, and that some service will be rendered that will not altogether disappoint their expectation.

9, SURREY SQUARE,
January 6th, 1869.

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CONGREGATIONAL HISTORY.



CHAPTER I.

THE Papacy attained its zenith in the thirteenth century. At that period the Romish system was fully developed. Innocent III., as the ^{Zenith of} vicar of Christ, claimed for himself divine ^{the Papacy.} prerogatives. It was contended by the interpreters of canon law that the sentence of the Pope, as the vicegerent of heaven, superseded all reasons and precluded every kind of appeal. Sacerdotal pretension rose to its highest pitch. ALEXANDER HALES and THOMAS AQUINAS began to teach boldly that the priest could "make the body of Christ" and "act in the person of Christ." The theory of transubstantiation invented by the Schoolmen received formal sanction for the first time at the Council of Lateran, in the year 1215. The celibacy of the ^{1215.} priesthood now became an inviolable law. Separated as a distinct caste from ordinary society, the clerical body acted everywhere as the legionaries of the papal court. The network of ecclesiastical power was spread over all the nations of Christendom, bringing within its meshes people of every class and condition.

The supremacy and independence of Popedom—secured by the genius and indomitable energy of Hildebrand (Gregory VII.), and maintained by the craft and diligence of his successors—Boniface VIII. (1294—1303) resolved to make perpetual by the force of an unalterable decree. Circumstances seemed to favour his ambitious design. The powers of Europe at the time were wasting their resources in mutual strife. The Sovereign Pontiff seized with eagerness the occasion to accomplish his long-cherished purposes of aggrandisement.

In the course of a long and desperate contest with Philip the Fair, for temporal as well as spiritual supremacy in the kingdom of France,* he issued, in November, 1302, the famous Bull, entitled UNAM SANCTUM, in which he set forth the demands of the Holy See in their most stringent form. “The Church,” he therein declares, “is one body, and has one head. Under its command are two swords: the one to be used by the Supreme Pontiff himself, the other by kings and knights by his license and at his will. But the lesser sword must be subject to the greater, and the temporal to the spiritual authority. *We declare that every human being must be subject to the see of Rome.* We assert we define and pronounce this to be an article of faith.”†

* Baillet Hist. des démêlés du P. Bonif. avec Phil. P. du Puy. Hist. du Différend entre le Pape Bon. et Phil. le Bel. ; Gieseler, Cunningham's Transl., vol. ii. p. 247 ; Dollinger, iv. 80 ; Capefigue, ii. 181.

† Raynaldus, 1302, cap. xiii. p. 328.

Nothing can be conceived in more direct contrast with the simple institution of the Christian Church, as described in the New Testament, than the system which in successive stages—^{The Christian Church and the Papacy.} from the days of Constantine—had culminated at this time in the spiritual despotism of Rome. For the distinct appeal to “every man’s conscience,”* made by the apostles, was substituted the Pagan principle of unreasoning coercion. Instead of the “kingdom” which is “not of this world,”† we find a dominant hierarchy asserting its supremacy over every court in Europe, and exacting its claims by fire and sword. The law of Christ was set aside for a yoke of papal decrees and injunctions. The very idea of the Church as a company of sincere Christian believers, appears almost to have passed out of remembrance. The freedom of those who “know the truth”‡ was exchanged for mental serfdom to which there is no parallel. The equality of Christian pastors existed no longer. All traces of primitive purity were lost in the excesses of vice and in the perpetration of crimes that made the papal court a sink of abomination. The election of church officers by the free suffrages of faithful brethren, after fasting and prayer, according to scriptural example, was practically unknown. Candidates for hierarchical distinction were nominated by rival factions, who sought success in the unseemly contest only by intrigue, bribery, or intimidation. The Supreme Pontiff himself was not unfrequently the nominee of some ruthless demagogue, rude

* 2 Cor. iv. 2.

† John xviii. 36.

‡ John viii. 32.

soldier, ambitious prince, or daring woman, who expected to share the worldly advantages of his elevation. As the papal court rose in temporal greatness, it sunk in moral corruption.

A century before the accession of Boniface VIII., when things were continually growing worse, St. Bernard* called attention to the enormities existing in the Romish Church. Writing to Innocent III. in the year 1153, he says: "There is but one voice among our faithful bishops which declares that justice is vanishing from the Church, and the power of the keys is gone—that episcopal authority is dwindling away—that a bishop can no longer redress wrong, nor chastise iniquity, however great, in his own diocese; and the blame of all this they lay on you and on the Roman court."† "The ambitious, the grasping, the simoniacal, the sacrilegious, the adulterous, the incestuous, and all such monsters of humanity, flock to Rome, in order either to obtain or keep ecclesiastical honours in the hands of the Pope."‡

The indignant monk, in the tone of mingled bitterness and sorrow, enters into an enumeration of the vices to which the priests were addicted, and adds: "Among such men, you, their pastor, move about covered with gold and gorgeous apparel—what do the sheep get of it? If I might speak out, they are demons rather than sheep which graze in these pastures." The "Man of sin,"§ was enthroned

* Morison's Life of St. Bernard. *Histoire de Saint Bernard d'Aug Neander*, Transl. Vial.

† St. Bernard, epist. 178.

‡ De Consideratione, lib. i. cap. 10.

§ 2 Thess. ii. 3.

by a power consolidated for ages. Yet He who is "Head over all things to the Church, which is His body,"* had not ceased to reign. Even when the triumph of error appeared to be absolute, there was the incipient germ of spiritual restoration, almost imperceptible indeed to human ken, but having divine vitality as the "incorruptible seed."†

We propose, by the light of indubitable evidence, to trace the course of this revival of first principles in relation to church polity. The dawn of the Reformation, like that which breaks on the top of the mountains after a long and cheerless night, cannot be determined with unfailing exactness as to time. We cannot fix a precise date either to the discovery of a principle or to the first renewed application of a long-forgotten truth. It is often the result of the inquiries of many minds, continued through successive generations, and simultaneously directed to different points.

Proposed
historical
inquiry.

In the investigation on which we are entering we frame for ourselves, therefore, no particular theory of ecclesiastical development, nor do we look for the appearance of witnesses in any regular order of succession. The divine plan can never be anticipated by human sagacity. Reverently following the direction of truth, we shall advance with even step, though the path may be intricate, as in a gloomy forest or an entangled wilderness, with the cheering persuasion that we shall find an outlet, and obtain in the end a prospect, fair and commanding, that shall more than recompense our toil.

* Eph. i. 22, 23.

† 1 Pet. i. 23.

One fact alone may assure us at the outset. The light of divine revelation in the darkest ages was never extinguished. It might be concealed and neglected, or for a time withdrawn from the people by fraud or violence, but it could never be entirely removed. Originally the Romish Church did not prohibit the reading of the Holy Scriptures to the laity. Gregory I. (590—604) says: "Let no one plead that silly and absurd excuse: it is no business of mine to read the Scriptures; this belongs to those who have renounced the world, who are stationed upon the hill-tops, and whose life is occupied in such matters. Do you plead that it is not your business to read the Scriptures because you are distracted with innumerable cares? For this reason it is more yours than that of the monks."*

The early Church provided the different nations by whom the gospel was received with a translation of the Scriptures in their own tongue. The ancient Syriac version was prepared for the Syrian converts. The Coptic and Thebaic versions were made for the poorer classes in Egypt in the second century. The Scriptures were translated into Ethiopian and Gothic in the fourth, into Armenian in the fifth, into Arabic in the seventh, into Georgian in the eighth, and into Slavonian in the ninth centuries.

Amidst all their conceits and vagaries, the Fathers recognized the Holy Scriptures as the final standard of appeal. "If Christ alone must be heard," said Cyprian,† "we ought not to give heed

* 3rd Homily on the History of Lazarus. Hertzog.

† Ep. lxii. Wallis Transl., pp. 217, 218.

to what another before us may have thought was to be done ; but what Christ, who is before all, first did. Neither is it becoming to follow the practice of man, but the truth of God ; since God speaks by Isaiah the prophet, and says, ‘ In vain do they worship me, teaching the commandments and doctrines of men.’* And again the Lord, in the gospel, repeats the same saying, and says, ‘ Ye reject the commandment of God, that ye may keep your own tradition.’† Augustine often appeals to the canonical Scriptures as the one common and infallible authority.‡

When the Latin language ceased to be spoken, there was a long interval in which the public services of the Church became unintelligible to the people, and they were at once entertained and debased by foolish legends and vain traditions, invented by the priests. The Bible for a time fell into practical desuetude. “Mysteries,” “Moralities,” and “Miracle-plays,” took the place of the simple reading of the Word of God.

Disuse of
the Latin
Version.
New Trans-
lations.

As soon, however, as the vernacular tongues were completely formed in the south of France, Germany, and Provence, various attempts were made to translate the Scriptures for the use of the people. Portions also of the sacred volume were translated into Anglo-Saxon at an early period by the venerable Bede (674—735).

The newly-born nations of Europe were taught in their mother-tongue the words of inspiration, and their several languages were formed to a great

* Isa. xxix. 13.

† Mark vii. 9.

‡ Contra Cres., lib. 1, cap. xxxi. xxxii. xxxiii ; Migne, tom. xliii.

extent, and enriched, by the versions they received of the sacred text.

It does not appear that a papal interdict was issued against the use of these translations of the Bible until the time of Innocent III.

In the monasteries attention was given more or less to the reading of the Scriptures by individual students. The monks employed in the Scriptorium in making manuscript copies of the Bible and of the classical writings, it is true, performed their allotted task for the most part mechanically. They were more intent on illuminating the uncial or ornamental letters than in obtaining for themselves "the Light of life." Nevertheless the "Word of God" found entrance into the minds of some, and its radiance was diffused within the circle of their personal influence. Beyond these centres of illumination the shadows were deep and unbroken.

The close of the Crusades left society in Europe in a strange state of excitement. The homes of the people were made desolate. Many brooded over the past with feelings of the profoundest melancholy, and anticipated the future with sad forebodings. Others were restless to a degree that would not allow them to pursue a settled or useful occupation. New mendicant orders sprang into existence, and skilfully adapted themselves to this peculiar social condition.

In connection with one of these fraternities a body of Separatists from the Church of Rome originated in a manner that is worthy of careful attention. We shall

The Bible
in the Mo-
nasteries.

State of so-
ciety after
the Cru-
sades.

Separatists
from the
Church of
Rome.

find in the singular story of attempted monastic reformation a curious prelude to more important and extensive ecclesiastical changes.

FRANCIS OF ASSISI,* in 1207, founded an order called Franciscans, or Friars Minors. The account of his miracles and personal eccentricities reads like rich burlesque. He is said to have comforted a poor child who had the misfortune to break some eggs in a basket, by restoring the fractures; and in one of the pictures—admired as a production of legendary art—the sanctimonious dotard is represented as preaching to a brood of chickens. These fantastic puerilities, which might be enumerated in any quantity, are not peculiar, however, to St. Francis; one of his followers, in imitation of his example, gave a formal discourse to a shoal of fishes. The calendar of Romish saints is full of pious trumperies not the less absurd. St. Francis, therefore, excited no suspicion as to his sanity by these vagaries. They seem rather to have raised him in the estimation of the Pope, who wrote letters commanding the prelates to receive his wildest dreams as those of special revelation. His Holiness protested to the incredulous that he had seen the stigmata, or five wounds, inflicted on the person of the saint by Christ himself. There was a charm, no doubt, in these absurd frivolities, just as we see, amidst the greater intelligence of the nineteenth century, persons of erudition and taste doating over them with fondness alike pitiable and amusing.†

Francis of
Assisi,
1207.

* Wadding's *Annal Frat. Minor*; Bonaventura, *Life of St. Francis*; *Act. Sanct.*, Jun. v., 661; Oct. tom. ii., fol. 699. Spanheim.

† See Manning's *Preface to the Life of St. Francis*.

Apart from the delirious folly of the miraculous pretensions of St. Francis, there was something in the spirit of the man and of his system that won the admiration of many. In an age of voluptuous indulgence he inculcated the strictest self-denial. Yet it is affirmed that he attached no meritorious importance to acts of self-mortification, but regarded them simply as means for promoting purity of heart. He breathes the most ardent desires for the spiritual welfare of his brethren. "To win souls to God," he says, "is more precious to Him, if it proceeds from true love, than any offering." Whilst the mass of people around him were intent on worldly gain, he interpreted in a strictly literal sense the words of Christ, "Provide neither gold nor silver." His companions speak with rapture of the effect produced by his glowing words, and in particular of the enthusiastic zeal with which, in the time of the Crusades, he devoted himself to his mission to the Mohammedan army at the siege of Damietta. His followers entertained for him a sort of idolatrous reverence, and he occupied a place in their regard scarcely second to that of the divine Redeemer.

Some of the more strict Franciscans, after the death of the founder of their order (1226), studied the writings of JOACHIM,* Abbot of Flore, in Calabria, and incorporated his ideas into their system. This extraordinary man was of opinion that Scripture might be interpreted in a

Joachim
of Flore,
1226.

* Act. Sanct., 29th May, 443; Neander, vii. 296, *seq.*; British Magazine, xvi. xviii.; Gieseler, ii. 300; Joh Wolfi, Lect. Mem., tom. i. p. 443; Act. Sanct. Maji, tom. vii. p. 89, 29th May.

twelve-fold manner; and giving himself the full latitude of this elastic theory, it is not surprising that some of his expositions of the more obscure parts of the Bible, had the semblance of new revelations, in which the simple meaning of the original text is entirely overlooked. In common with men of similar idiosyncrasy, the prophetic books of Scripture received his chief attention. He had a genius for the obscure. To learning or critical skill he attached no value whatever, but trusted rather to spiritual insight without the aid of mental culture. To employ the reasoning of the Schoolmen, he said, was like breaking open the door of Lot—the House of Contemplation. Visionary as he was, three Popes in succession expressed their approbation of his views, and kings paid the most respectful deference to his prophetic utterances. He framed a system of the moral universe, and, sketching a plan of the divine operations, he assigned a distinct part to the several persons of the Trinity. Carried away with prophetic fancies, he tried to demonstrate from Scripture that the history of the world would exhibit three grand stages of progression. Many of his speculations are sufficiently bewildering, but there were several points in his writings that the dullest could not fail to comprehend, and that were calculated to make a lasting impression on the minds of the most insensible. He laid bare with an unsparing hand the corruptions of the Romish Church. “The Church of Peter,” he says, “which was full is now empty; for, although she now seems full of people, yet they are not her people, but strangers. They are not her sons, the citizens of

the heavenly Jerusalem, but the sons of Babylon. What profits the name of Christ, where the power is wanting? The Church is as it were bereft; there are but few or no bishops who, to save the flocks, expose themselves a prey to the wolves. Every man seeks his own, and not the things of Jesus Christ.”* “Where,” he asks, “is there more contention, more vice and ambition, than among the clergy of our Lord?”† All the terms descriptive of the Apocalyptic Babylon he freely applied to Rome. She was, in his judgment, “the mother of harlots.” As distinct from this formal and corrupt Church, Joachim recognizes a *pure and spiritual community to be called into existence by the Holy Spirit*. When speaking of the abolition of the “letter,” he runs into the greatest extremes; but a view of religion is given by him strongly contrasted with that of mere external observances. “Many of the laity,” he says, “expect to be saved by the offerings of the priests, and the prayers of the regular clergy, even when they give themselves up to sin. But in vain they look to such gods for help. Their incense is an abomination to God.”‡ “That which is represented outwardly in the sacraments can be of no saving benefit whatever to a man, if in his daily actions he does not strive to live conformably to what is thus outwardly represented. For why wast thou baptized into Christ, if thou wilt not be pure? Why art thou buried in baptism, if thou wilt continue to live in sin?”§

Teaching of this kind greatly interested a section

* Neander, vii., 301, *seq.*; De Concordia Novi et veteris testamenti, p. 54.

† L. c. p. 53.

‡ L. c. p. 104.

§ In Apoc. p. 91.

of the Franciscans. Other communities of their order found the rule of voluntary poverty too strict for them, and obtained the papal sanction in 1231 to a constitution that allowed a considerable relaxation. This led to a division,

and to contention between the two parties that continued for a long period, and with considerable virulence. The stricter body were called *Spirituales*.

On the granting of further license to the order by Innocent IV., in 1245, the *Spirituales* offered resistance, and were compelled to retire into woods and deserts. John of Parma, elected General in 1247, recalled the banished party, and enforced the rule of St. Francis.

The controversy went on with alternate victory and defeat to both sides, until a crisis arose from the order of Nicolas III. (1279), who explained the rule of the founder still more laxly. The *Spirituales*, in consequence, were roused to a more decided opposition, headed by JOHN PETER OLIVA* (1279), a native of Serignam and educated in Paris. Oliva was an intense admirer of the writings of Joachim, and closely followed his example in the interpretation of prophecy. St. Francis he regarded as the patron saint, exhibiting the perfect image of Christ. Enlarging the plan of his favourite teacher, he divided the prophetic course of church development into seven ages. The first, its foundation by the apostles; the second, its preservation by the sufferings of the martyrs; the third,

1231.

SPIRITUALES
exiled in
1245.

1247.

JOHN PETER
OLIVA, 1279.

* Wadding *Annales*, 1289, n. 29; Fleury, xciii., tom. xix; Oudini *Comm. de Script. Eccl.* tom. iii. 548; Baluz. et Mansi *Miscell.* lib. i., 293, *seq.*, ii. 276, *seq.*; D'Argentrè *Coll. Judic.*, tom. i. p. 226.

the evolution and defence of the faith in the contests with heretics ; the fourth, the period of the Anchorites living in strict mortification, who poured a bright light on the Church by their example ; the fifth, the period of the common life of monks and clerks, some of whom practised greater severity, others accommodated themselves to the ordinary mode of living ; the sixth, the renewal of the Evangelical and the extirpation of the Antichristian life, with which is connected the final conversion of the Jews and Pagans, or at once *the reconstruction of the primitive Church* ; the seventh age is, in relation to this earthly life, a sort of Sabbath—a peaceful and miraculous participation in future blessedness, as if the heavenly Jerusalem had descended upon earth ; but in its relation to the future life, it is the general resurrection, the glorification of the saints, and the end of all things.* Into the details of this prophetic scheme we do not enter. The thoughts of Oliva reverted to the primitive Church, but he could see no way to the return of a state of things so pure and divinely simple, but by the influence of monkery. Of course, he anticipated that the Franciscans would have to play an important part in the work of Church restoration ; if faithful to their trust, they would encounter great hostility, but with growing spirituality the final victory, in his judgment, was certain.

The theories of Oliva were often examined by commissioners appointed for the purpose, and were either connived at or condemned, according to the circumstances of the time and the predilections of those who conducted the inquiry. Ultimately, they

* Neander, viii. 443, *seq.* ; Baluz. Miscell., i. f. 213.

were formally denounced, and to give the more effect to the papal anathema, the ashes of the prophetic dreamer were exhumed, and cast into the Rhone.* All his apocalyptic interpretations might have been overlooked, but for his persistence in branding the Church of Rome with the name of Babylon. "She is Babylon," he said, "the great whore, because wickedness thrives and spreads in her, not only intensively but extensively, so that the good in her are like a few grains of gold in a vast sand-heap; and as the Jews in Babylon were captives, and grievously oppressed, so will the spirit of the righteous in this period, be oppressed and afflicted beyond endurance, by the countless host of a carnal church, which they are compelled to serve against their will. The Babylon which stood in heathendom, made all men drunk with her idolatries; so that Babylon, which is the carnal church, has made herself and all her people in subjection to her drunk, and led them astray by her shameful wantonness, simony, and worldly pomp; and as, previous to her fall, her malice and her power grievously oppressed the spirit of the elect, and hindered the conversion of the world, so will her overthrow be to the saints a release from captivity."†

After the death of Oliva (March 16, 1298), his views were warmly defended by UBERTIN DE CASAL,‡ one of his zealous disciples. The Spirituales, four years before this time, had been formed into a separate fraternity with

UBERTIN
DE CASAL,
1298.

* Raynaldus, 1325, p. 308; Fleury, tom. xix., liv. 93, cap. 18, p. 373.

† Neander, viii. 449.

‡ Baluz. Miscell., i. 293, 276.

the authority of Pope Celestine, under the name of the Poor Hermits.* They passed into Achaia, where a small island was assigned to them by Thomas de Sole, a seignior of the country, but in a short time opposition arose, and they were compelled to leave the place. In 1303 they embarked at Pouille, for Naples, where Andre de Segna gave them a poor habitation in an uncultivated desert. The Romish Inquisitor, however, would allow them no rest, and they were sent to Triventi, an episcopal city in Molisse.

After examination, they were imprisoned five months, and then publicly scourged in Naples before leaving the kingdom. Some succumbed under these tortures, and others went to France, and joined a company of Friars Minors of the same views, in Provence. Disappointed with the terms of a Bull issued from Avignon, April 14, 1310, the more ardent of the Spirituales separated from the Franciscans, and formed a distinct order, governed by a general and superiors appointed by themselves, practically renouncing the authority of the Pope, and were known as the *Fratricelli*.†

Pope John XXII. published a constitution (Jan. 23, 1318) for the Franciscans, entitled *Gloriosam Ecclesiam*,‡ in which he enumerates the errors of the Spirituales. Amongst other accusations, the Pope charges them with maintaining that the priests of the Church of Rome have no authority to pronounce absolution, to administer the sacraments, or to instruct the

THE POOR
HERMITS,
1303.

Fratricelli,
1310.
Gloriosam
Ecclesiam,
1318.

* Fleury, xix., liv. 91, cap. 42. Paris, 1726. † Capefigue, 747, 148.

‡ Raynaldus, 1318, xlv.; Gieseler, vol. iii. 92.

people; and further, that the priests, although legitimately ordained, if tainted with crime, lose the power to administer the sacraments. Many of the accused Spirituales were concealed in the island of Sicily, and others were dispersed among the "infidels, under the pretence of preaching the gospel." All were to be sought out, and either converted or exterminated.

Michael de Cesena, the General of the order, apprehended John Barrant de Toulouse, Deodatus Michael, William Santon, and Ponce Roque de Narbonne, and insisted on their obedience to the papal decree. On their refusal, they were transferred to Friar Michael Le Moine, the inquisitor in Provence. They would, however, retract nothing, but expressed their resolve to maintain their protestation against the infringement of the Franciscan order until the day of judgment. The inquisitor reminded them that no rule ought to be determined by the gospel, since the entire code must receive its validity from the Holy See, and might be enforced or abolished at the pleasure of the Sovereign Pontiff. The four friars remained inflexible, and received their definitive sentence on the 17th of May, 1318. The doctrines of Peter John Oliva were formally condemned on the same occasion. The inquisitor humbly requested the Bishop of Marseilles to proceed to the degradation of the heretical friars. Accordingly, he robed himself as for an ordination, and prepared an altar in the open field. He then ordered the condemned prisoners to be habited as for the functions of their office. Three of their number were priests. Ponce

Martyrdom
of Friars,
1318.

the fourth was only a deacon. The bishop exhorted them to be canonically degraded in every particular, stripped of every order, benefice, and privilege, and to have the sacerdotal mark scraped from their heads. This being done, they were given up to the secular power, and received by the magistrate, Chevalier Raimond de Villeneuve.

The bishop and inquisitor, in compliance with the custom of the holy office, prayed him to spare their lives; but as he understood this request in the negative sense, he proceeded on the same day to burn them at the stake. The chronicler of the event adds that "they were esteemed as martyrs by their sect."

Subsequently the Pope commenced a process against Ubertin de Casal, but, aware of his danger, he withdrew from the court of Rome without leave, and sought the protection of the Emperor Louis of Bavaria, and joined himself to MARSILIUS, of Padua.

In 1321, the Franciscans (Fratres de Communitate, as distinguished from the Fratricelli) fell into a violent controversy with the Dominicans,
 1321. on the question whether Christ and the apostles possessed anything whatever in common.

John XXII. decided in favour of the Dominicans, and declared against the doctrine of the Franciscans, renouncing in the name of the Church of Rome the possessions of that order. A general chapter of the

order was held in Perusium in June and
 1322. July, 1322, to frame counter regulations.

In these discussions, WILLIAM OF OCCAM, so called from the name of his native village (Ockham, in

Surrey), took part in opposing the decrees of the Pope. The more zealous Franciscans, with the General of their order, Michael de Cesena, WILLIAM OF OCCAM. at their head, and Occam, followed the example of Ubertin de Casal, and took refuge also at the Bavarian court. The majority of their order elected a new General nominated by the Pope. The Spirituales continued under many vicissitudes through the fourteenth century, meeting as *Separatist communities* in remote settle- Separatist communities. ments in Italy, until they were formally sanctioned by the Council of Constance, under the name of *Fratres regularis Observantie*.*

There is an interest in the movements of these people, beyond that connected with the history of monasticism. Amidst all that is artificial and eccentric in the regulations imposed by their leaders, we may distinctly observe a strong desire to be freed from papal domination, and to transfer their highest allegiance to Christ. They make their appeal to the gospel as the only unerring standard. It was the fervent desire of some of them, at least, to witness the restoration of the Church to its primitive simplicity and spirituality.

Their convictions on these important points, as we have seen, were so strong that four of their number suffered martyrdom. We cannot suppose that the haze of superstition passed away from their minds, but we must not forget their early associations, and the manner in which they had been trained. With their earnest longing for the truth, what might have been their approximation to the

* Fleury, tom. xix., liv. 92, cap. 43, 292, seq.

principles and order of the Christian Church, as set forth in the New Testament, if free and unmolested, they could have sat down together to examine the sacred record for themselves. We know not, indeed, in their secluded settlements, how far these exiles for conscience' sake attained in their quest for the right way. The Christian disciple who might submit to the law of Christ so far as to renounce the rule of the strictest of these fraternities, would pass in consequence from our view. How many of these "hidden ones" were sheltered beneath the care of the Good Shepherd, history can furnish us no information. They belong to the multitude that "no man can number."

The discussions that subsequently arose on the question of the equality of Christian pastors, are for that period very remarkable.

The contest between Boniface VIII. and Philip, led to the formation of an Italian and a French party.

In the pursuit of his antagonistic policy, the King of France so influenced the election of the new Pope on the death of Benedict XI. (the immediate successor of Boniface VIII.), that his own nominee, Clement V., was chosen, and the seat of the Papacy was transferred from Rome to Avignon.

The corruption of the pontifical court increased to a frightful extent. Clement died in 1314, and after remaining vacant for two years, the papal throne was occupied by John XXII. To indemnify himself for his necessary subserviency to France, he attempted to exercise absolute sway in Germany, and entered

Growing
corruption
of Rome,
1314.

into a violent contest with the Emperor, Louis IV. In the assertion of his hated supremacy, he laid the Imperial States under interdict. The contention led to the examination of the pretensions of the Papacy by the refugees, who had taken shelter at the Bavarian court.

WILLIAM OF OCCAM,* in his voluminous dialogues and other writings, searches with characteristic keenness every part of the papal system—stating, as he proceeds in the investigation, the arguments in its defence, in order, by pertinent and forcible replies, to show their futility. Especially noteworthy is the assertion in one of his dialogues of the sufficiency of Scripture as the rule of faith.

DIALOGUES
OF OCCAM.
Sufficiency
of Scrip-
ture.

He maintains that nothing is to be regarded as truth according to catholic consent, and necessary to be believed in order to salvation, but what is expressly declared in the canonical Scriptures, or to be clearly deduced from them. In proof of this he cites Proverbs xxx. 5: "Every word of God is pure: He is a shield unto them that put their trust in Him. Add thou not unto his words, lest He reprove thee." Deuteronomy iv. 2: "Ye shall not add unto the word which I command you, neither shall ye diminish ought from it, that ye may keep the commandments of the Lord your God which I command you;" and Revelation xxii. 18, 19: "I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book: and if any

* Goldast, ii 313—1236.

man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book."

Occam quotes passages from St. Augustine in support of his views, and sums up the argument in three general conclusions :

1. That out of Scripture, catholic truth essential to salvation is not to be found; but that within the inspired volume all is contained necessary to be believed, and all pernicious error is condemned.

2. It is equally clear that the New Testament is not less sufficient for Christian believers than the Old Testament was for the Hebrews; and, as all faith binding on them was distinctly revealed in the Old Testament, in like manner all the truth necessary to be believed unto salvation is contained in the New Testament.

3. Whatever can be proved to be condemned in the Word of God can have no binding force. Neither the Pope nor any other human authority, whether individual or collective, can make new articles of faith. We may examine the evidence given in support of their statements, or admit the soundness of their arguments, but they are not to be recognized as of divine validity.

In his polemical treatises against the Pope, Occam aims to prove that his Holiness is a "complete heretic." After the manner of the

The Pope a heretic.

Schoolmen, he raises questions, and examines them in every imaginable light. "Is it possible," he asks, "for the College of Cardinals to be heretics? Can a council be heretical? Can the

Church of Rome fall into heresy? Is it possible for the Pope to be heretical?"

Not to leave any point untouched, he inquires further: "What constitutes catholicity? What constitutes heresy? Who is the heretic?"

To determine these important and exciting questions, Occam appeals only to the standard of divine revelation.

It had been the practice of the court of Rome to decide on all ecclesiastical matters by reference to Canon Law. The jurist took the place of the theologian. John XXII., in his controversy with the emperor, relied on the canonists. Occam and his coadjutors contended that in Church questions such authorities are of no value. The supreme law was to be found, they said, only in the Word of God.

The claims of the Pope formed no exception. His Holiness must submit to be judged by the same open, unerring, and divine rule. Occam, therefore, did not shrink from pressing other questions, however rash it might seem even to repeat them. "1. Can the spiritual and lay power dwell in the same person? 2. Does the supreme lay power derive its own special property directly from God? 3. Is it clear that the jurisdiction committed to the emperor is given by Christ through the Pope and the Roman Church? 4. Has a king of the Romans, or an emperor, being elected, his power immediately from God? 5. Does an hereditary prince derive his power over temporals from the consecrating oil of the priest, or only some spiritual endowment? 6. Is he subject to him who crowns him? 7. Does he lose his title if he is crowned by some other arch-

bishop than the ordinary one? 8. Has a regularly and formally elected emperor or king of the Romans the same functions as an hereditary sovereign?"*

The replies to these queries are greatly extended, and in the discussion of the different points that arose, Occam gives expression to many crude and fantastic notions; but the fact that the Pope was so publicly questioned before the scholars of Europe, and that these political and theological dialogues were read in the universities, and in some form, we may say, continually rehearsed, could not fail to stimulate many to further inquiries, and to look more carefully to the foundations, social and ecclesiastical.

MARSILIUS† of Padua, in common with Occam, recognizes the New Testament as the only sufficient rule for the government of the Christian Church. In his "*Defensor Pacis*" he says that the New Testament contains principles applicable to all the relations of life, but as a code it is intended only for that which has reference to the spiritual and the eternal, as when our Lord Jesus said, "My kingdom is not of this world."

Marsilius contends that this law of the New Testament was made purposely simple in order that it might be understood by all. "By the apostles," he says, "as organs immediately actuated and guided by the divine power, the precepts and counsels directing to eternal salvation have been committed to writing, that, in the absence of Christ and the apostles, we may know what they are."

Of the Church as a spiritual society he says:

* Occam in Goldast.

† Goldast, ii. 151—312.

New Testa-
ment the
rule of the
Church.

"*Christ ever continues to be the Head of the Church*; all apostles and ministers of the Church are but his members according to the words of the apostle (Eph. iv. 10—12): 'He that descended is the same also that ascended far above all heavens, that He might fill all things. And He gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ.'"

Christ the
Head of the
Church.

He insists that to the Church should belong no sort of coercive or punitive power. This should belong exclusively to the State: as in fact, immoralities could not be punished by the State as such, but only so far as they were a violation of the laws of the State. Many things contrary to the laws of God must needs be tolerated by the State. Civil and divine punishments belong to entirely different provinces.

Church has
no punitive
power.

The office of the Christian minister, in his view, is to *instruct in order to convince, and not to compel men by temporal punishments to obey religious precepts.*

Office of
the minister
to instruct.

He arrives at the conclusion that there should be an equality in ministers.

Equality of
ministers.

"These names, *Presbyter* and *Episcopus*," he says, "in the primitive church were synonymous, although they may have been used to indicate different properties; for presbyter is employed to express age, as a senior; episcopus (bishop) is used to express dignity, or care over others, as overseer. Hence Jerome in a certain epistle to Evander, a presbyter, commonly entitled, *Qualiter presbyter et diaconus differant*, writes to this effect, 'Presbyter and episcopus, the former signifies age, the latter

dignity.' Hence in the epistles to Titus and Timothy, on the ordination of bishops and deacons, it is clear that the office must be implied in case of the presbyters, because the presbyter is comprehended in the episcopus. This also plainly appears in the first chapter of the Epistle to the Philippians, addressed to Paul, 'To all the saints in Christ Jesus which are at Philippi, with the bishops and deacons.' Observe that he does not call the ministers otherwise than *episcopi*. It is certain that many *episcopi* were in one city, and not otherwise than because many ministers were there. The same thing is equally apparent in the first chapter of the Epistle of Paul to Titus, 'For this cause,' he writes, 'left I thee in Crete, that thou shouldest set in order the things that are wanting, and ordain presbyters in every city as I had appointed thee.' 'If any be blameless,' the apostle immediately adds, in reference to the qualifications of the presbyters, 'for an episcopus must be blameless, as the steward of God.' To what could these conditions for the appointment of presbyters apply, unless he called the presbyter episcopus? The same apostle, in the twentieth chapter of Acts, addressing the ministers of our Church, namely of Ephesus, says, 'Take heed, therefore, unto yourselves, and to all the flock over which the Holy Ghost hath made you *episcopi* (overseers), to rule (regere) the Church of God which He hath purchased with his own blood.' It must be observed that in the Church of Ephesus, a single town, the apostle addressed many as *episcopi*, which was not the fact, unless on account of the number of ministers, who were all designated *episcopi*, simply for this reason, that it was their duty to oversee or watch over the people.

"In the Church at a later period, he who was instituted the primate of the ministers of the city or district by the other ministers and people, appropriated to himself the name of episcopus exclusively. But the apostle was in the habit of calling these *episcopi* rather than presbyters, in order to bring to their remembrance the care and solicitude which they ought to exercise for the faithful. In the spirit of humility he preferred to speak of himself as presbyter, not episcopus. Compare 1 Tim. iv. 14, 'Neglect not the gift that is in thee, which was given thee by prophecy, with the laying on of the hands of the presbytery,' with 2 Tim. i. 6, 'Wherefore I put thee in remembrance that thou stir up the gift of God, which is

in thee by the putting on of my hands.' In like manner Peter and John call themselves seniors (elders), that is presbyter, because that name was applied to denote age; for example, in 1 Pet. v. 1, "The elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ," and in 3 John 1, etc., the senior (elder) unto the well-beloved Gaius. But where the common text of the canon has senior or con-senior, St. Jerome, in the above named epistle, has in their places presbyter and con-presbyter. But after the times of the apostles the number of the ministers having notably increased, in order to avoid scandal and schism, the ministers elected one of their number to take the direction and management of affairs appertaining to the ecclesiastical office, and the performance of its duties, the distribution of oblations and the disposal of all things in the manner most convenient, lest each acting independently in his own capacity, should disturb good order, and create confusion because of the diversity of disposition. This person, as he had been elected to rule the other ministers in accordance with the practice of later times, appropriated to himself exclusively the name episcopus as superintendent for this reason, because he not only took the oversight of the faithful laity (*populo*), for the performance of which service all the ministers in the primitive church were called episcopi, but also because he had the supervision in like manner of the other presbyters, he retained exclusively, as did he of Antioch, the name episcopus, but all others received the simple appellation ministers. But the election or institution by men, now mentioned, as an election *conferred no increase whatever of essential merit, or ministerial authority, or of superiority*, it only gave him a certain power in the economical arrangement in the house or temple of God, to allot the duties of the several ministers and deacons, and other officials, and to regulate the performance of them, as in these days a prior is empowered to regulate the service of his monks. None of them possessed coercive authority other than that conceded by human legislation."*

The attitude of resistance to papal domination assumed by Marsilius is bold and determined. He

* Goldast *Monarchia Romano Imperii*. Franc, 1614, tom. ii. pp. 239, 240.

canvasses with trenchant freedom the Bull fulminated by Boniface VIII. The proposition contained in UNAM SANCTAM, that the unqualified supremacy of the Pope is essential to be believed in order to salvation, he declares to be "false from the beginning, in the present time, and in all future time; the most pernicious of all imaginable falsehoods to every civilized human being." "Such epistles and decrees," he adds, "as those issued by the Pope, seem to be the ravings of a madman."*

It was no part of the aim of Marsilius to restore the primitive practice in church polity. He introduces the Scriptural argument only incidentally as subservient to his main design. He held a brief as an imperial advocate, with a view to reinstate the temporal power as superior to that of the Pope. Turning aside from all the proofs to be obtained from Scripture, and on the mere strength of unsupported assertion, he claims for kings the right to summon together all religious assemblies, to appoint ministers of every kind, and to depose them at pleasure, as well as to enact laws for the suppression of heresy. He admits that, in the time of the apostles, Christian churches elected their own officers; but he assigns as a reason for their practice that they lived under the reign of Pagan kings. Since the world has been favoured with Christian rulers, he would assign to them in religious matters the most perfect supremacy. Practically, therefore, the principles expounded by the refugees in the court of Bavaria, as derived from Scripture, were not consistently applied by them. They wrote only as hired

* Goldast *Monarchia Romano Imperii*, Franc, 1614, tom. ii. pp. 257, 258.

partisans, superseding for convenience the theories they had maintained ; but the fact remains, that the simple constitution of the Christian Church was exhibited in their writings more than five centuries ago. Occam, refusing to obey the command of the Pope to return to the duties of his order, was excommunicated. Ultimately, however, he complied with the requisition of his Holiness, and was absolved. He died in 1347. John

XXII. issued a decree of excommunication against Marsilius in 1327. He died in the month of September, 1328, at Monte-Malto. The emperor, on whom the monastic reformers had relied for protection, was defeated, and his power broken. The strength of the Franciscan Spirituales, like the shadow of Egypt, passed away.

We have not yet done with the friars who were unconsciously the precursors of reformation. A mendicant order, in rivalry of the Franciscans, was founded by St. Dominic, the only saint in the calendar, we are told, "in whom a solitary speck of goodness is not to be found."* The story of his inhuman cruelties will come before our notice shortly. We refer to the Dominicans now only to advert briefly to a movement tending to reformation with which one of this order was connected.

JOHN TAULER† was a man superior to his professed principles as a Dominican friar. Unlike the founder of his order, he deprecated the exercise of severity toward the erring. He

* Southey.

† Hist., Life, and Sermons of Tauler. S. Winksworth.

took the side of the Imperial party in their protracted contest with the Pope.

When the papal interdict in 1324 was enforced, the Dominicans as a body quitted Strasburg. Tauler, nevertheless, remained to watch over the people, notwithstanding the prohibition of all religious service; forlorn, solitary, and in constant peril, yet he could not tear himself from the scene of misery around him.

For more than twenty years the country was in a most wretched condition. The Emperor Louis died in 1347, worn out and broken-hearted. The land was desolated by famine, earthquakes, fire and sword. As a climax to the sufferings of the people, in 1348 the Black Death made its appearance. In Strasburg alone sixteen thousand persons were swept away by this awful pestilence.

In the midst of these terrible calamities vice became rampant. Deprived of the ordinary ministrations of the Church, many entered the convents, and others formed themselves into communities or unions, without observing the rules of any order. The priests gave themselves up to dissipation, and the nuns followed their bad example.

The statutes passed by a synod convened by Bishop Berthold in 1335 for the purpose of removing abuses, give a vivid picture of their irregularities. The clergy allowed their hair to grow long, in order to conceal the tonsure; wore boots of red, yellow, and green, and bedecked themselves with gold lace and gay

Papal
interdict,
1324.

1347.

Black
Death, 1348.

Dissipation
of monks
and nuns.

Profligate
clergy,
1335.

ribbons. They were to be found in taverns, associated with the worst companions; and the nuns, with the same absence of restraint, met the laymen in routs and dancing parties.

Amidst these corruptions Tauler continued his ministry, insisting chiefly on the necessity of inward piety. In opposition to the Franciscans, who dwelt almost exclusively on the importance of external poverty, he inculcated the duty of seeking true humility of spirit. He united himself with an association known as the "Friends of God," adopting the designation from the words of Christ, "From henceforth I call you not servants, but I have called you friends."*

Friends of
God.

Possessing sympathies in common on subjects of the highest importance, they sought each other out, and clung to one another the more from the darkness, sorrow, and conflict around them. "The prince of this world," says Tauler in one of his sermons, "has now-a-days been sowing brambles among the roses in all directions, insomuch that the roses are often choked, or sorely torn by the brambles. Children, there must needs be flight or a *destruction; some sort of separation*, whether within the cloisters or without, and it does not make them into a sect that the Friends of God profess to be unlike the world's friends."

Separation
and com-
munion.

This association had no very definite principles for its guidance, and it included many whose views of truth were exceedingly beclouded. Yet it is in-

* John xv. 15.

teresting to observe the expression of *the desire for real communion.*

Tauler, in conjunction with Thomas of Strasburg, an Augustinian, and the Prior-General of his order in Strasburg; and Ludolph of Saxony, Prior of the Convent of the Carthusians, issued an address to the "clerical body at large, showing how iniquitous it was that the poor ignorant people should be suffered to die excommunicate for no fault of their own, and calling on the priests to visit the sick and dying, and no longer to refuse them the consolation of religion, forasmuch as Christ had died for all men, and the Pope had no power to close heaven against an innocent person."

Protest
against the
ban of the
Pope.

"There be two swords," they say in a second letter, "the spiritual sword, which is the Word of God, and the other, which is the secular government; *and the one hath nought to do with the other.* But since they are both of God, they cannot be contrary the one to the other; but the spiritual shall be diligent in its office and in the Word of God, and defend the government, and the government shall defend God's laws and the pious, and punish the wicked. But since the pious who preach the Word of God ought by God's ordinances to be defended by the secular power against the wicked, wherefore then should the government be condemned by the spiritual power? for then should God condemn his own work; but when a secular head sins, it behoves the spiritual head, with great humility, to point out unto the sinner the right way, and with the rest of the clergy to entreat God day and night with tears, that the sinner may turn again from his way, and come to a true knowledge of his sins; for God desireth not the death of a sinner, but rather that he should turn from his wickedness and live.

"But Christ, and the Apostles, and the Church command that—if the sinner, after much admonition, will not be turned

The two
swords.

from his ways, he be excommunicated till such time as he shall be converted again, and amend his life; and then he shall be again received into grace.

“Much less doth it behove a Christian shepherd, if one be deserving of excommunication, to condemn and excommunicate without distinction innocent persons, who perchance have never known or seen the guilty man—nay, whole lands, cities, and villages; the which is not commanded by Christ, nor the holy Apostles, nor the councils, but cometh of a *self-usurped power*. For it is the office of the Pope to point sinners unto the true way of salvation.

“But that all those are heretics who will not kiss the Pope’s foot, or that to do so should be an article of faith, and that he is an apostate from the Church who takes the name and fulfils the office of king and emperor, on being duly appointed thereto by the electors, or that all who render obedience to him—as to their ruler ordained by God—sin against the Church and are heretics, cannot be proved by holy Scripture.

“The government is a power ordained of God, unto which obedience ought to be rendered in worldly things, even by spiritual persons, be they who they may. The emperor is the highest magistrate, wherefore obedience is due to him; if he will not govern rightly, he, and not his poor subject, must give account thereof to God; and even as God will not call the poor innocent subject to account for his evil ruler, so ought not man to condemn and excommunicate the poor innocent subject for the sake of his ruler. Moreover, they who hold the true Christian faith, and sin only against the Pope’s person, are no heretics; but he were a heretic who, after so much admonition, should stiff-neckedly disobey the Word of God, and would not amend his life; for not even a murderer, a rogue, a thief, or an adulterer, who should ask pardon through Christ with true penitence and contrition, and amend his life, can be cast out of the Church.

“Hence it is concluded, that all those who unjustly and innocently have come under the ban, are free before God, and their curse will be turned into a blessing, and their ban and yoke of oppression will God lift off; even as Christ did not set Himself against the secular power when He said, ‘My kingdom is not of this world.’ Even as He was obedient to the government,

though He was the Son of God, commanding men to render to God the things that be God's, and to Cæsar the things that be Cæsar's. Now our souls belong to God, and our bodies and goods unto Cæsar."*

Cramped within the iron framework of Popery, and pressed down with a load of unmeaning customs and ceremonies, it is touching to see the yearning of these earnest spirits for freedom and light.

They seem for a time to have grasped a principle which, if faithfully followed, would have led to emancipation, but their homage to the truth was too partial, and, after a fitful struggle to break the yoke, they yielded again to the influences which so firmly kept them down.

The indisposition on the part of many to accept the burden of personal responsibility in matters of religion has prepared them to welcome any mode of escape—in cheerless negations, or in the pretended infallibility of the Church in which they could transfer to a priest the weight of accountability, and excuse themselves from all further concern. The mystics of the Tauler school met them half way, and tried practically to split the principle of implicit reliance on the Scripture "given by inspiration of God,"† and offered to their adherents an intermediate support in a kind of religious monitor, whose counsel was to be followed implicitly. "The safer course," says Tauler, "for those who would fain live for the truth, is to have a 'Friend of God,' and *submit to be guided by him* according to God's spirit. Eighty miles or more would not be too

Religious
Monitors.

* Specklin's *Collectanea*; Winksworth's *Tauler*, pp. 131, 132.

† 2 Tim. iii. 16.

far to go in search of a 'Friend of God' who knew the right way, and could direct them in it." * "Give your whole self simply and solely to God, and to the chosen Friends of God, that they may carry you along to God with themselves."† Tauler was accepted as such a guide by some who, in their excited feelings and heated imaginations, persuaded themselves that they were directed to him by special visions and revelations. All who came to recognize him as their spiritual leader were not equally tractable; and, to his surprise, he met with an inquirer who administered reproof to him for his defective teaching. The man travelled one hundred and twenty miles to hear him preach at Strasburg. The sermon did not produce the effect which Tauler expected; and the stranger explained that he was far better taught by an internal master. "Know," said he, "that when this master comes to me, he teaches me more in an hour than you, and all the teachers who are of time, could teach me if they went on to the last day." Tauler was so impressed by the decided tone of this communication, that he accepted the stranger as his own instructor.‡

The inconvenience and uncertainty of following the "light within" lie in the absence of any proper test. The oracular tone of the guide, or the attractiveness of his manner, affords no sure proof that we may not be led astray. "To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because *there is no light in them.*" §

* Bas. Ed., fol. 1466; Fr. Ed., p. 122; Neander, ix. 528.

† Bas. Ed., fol. 286; Fr. Ed., i., p. 265.

‡ Hist. Tauleri, Neander, ix. 531.

§ Isaiah viii. 20.

Tauler rambled with his self-confident conductor into a labyrinth of refined speculation. He persuaded himself that external ordinances would cease, and that there was no necessity, in consequence, to labour for the removal of abuses. “We gladly break off and strip away the leaves, to let the sun pour his rays without hindrance upon these young grapes. So all helps that become hindrances fall away from the Christian—images of saints, knowledge, exercises and prayer, and all means. The man should not *cast* these aside, however, but wait till they fall off themselves, through divine grace: that is, when the man is trained up to a higher stage, beyond all his understanding.” *

The practical issue of the course pursued in this indifference to the right use of Christian ordinances was not favourable to the advancement of truth or of practical godliness. Neander justly observes, “The highest regions of the interior life, in souls where impure elements rule, are exposed to the most dangerous perturbations; the deepest truths of religion, when they are not fairly apprehended, may intermingle indistinguishably with the most dangerous misconceptions. It is often but a very thin and subtle line which separates truth from error. Thus, the doctrine of these Friends of God respecting man’s ability and duty to go back to the deepest grounds of his being: respecting an inward concentration of the mind withdrawn from everything creaturely: utter renunciation of self, and absorption in God, was liable to pass over into very serious errors. Where the longing

* Bas. Ed., fol. 216; Fr. Ed., p. 199; Neander, ix. 557.

for union with God was not ever accompanied side by side with a consciousness of the self-subsistence of the creaturely spirit, and the infinite exaltation of God above the world, with a consciousness of sin standing in contrariety with the holiness of God; with a humility never forgetting the strict line that separates the creature from the Creator, the sobriety and modesty of true humility; where an unbridled imagination, a speculative spirit ignorant of its proper limits; where the intoxication of a soul governed entirely by its feelings, intermingled with the natural and the divine, and took complete possession of the man; in a word, where the mind, instead of holding fast to God revealed in Christ, would sink itself, without any mediation, in the unfathomable abyss of God unrevealed;—in all these cases and the like, they who knew not how to guard against such dangers by strict watchfulness over themselves, plunged into the gulf of Pantheistic deification.”*

* Neander, ix. pp. 535, 536.

CHAPTER II.

“THROUGH the greater part of the Middle Ages,” says Ullman, “we can trace a *succession of free spiritual associations*, which were often oppressed and persecuted by the hierarchy, pertained rather to the life of the people, than to the framework of the Church, exhibited more or less a regulated form, and professed a diversity of doctrines, but which all emanated from a fundamental endeavour after practical Christianity.”*

Free spiritual associations in the Middle Ages.

It is the peculiar property of evangelical truth, when accompanied by divine influence, to bring those by whom it is cordially received and obeyed, into Christian fellowship.† Wherever, therefore, the New Testament was devoutly read and esteemed as the “pearl of great price,” we find an association of believers called by different names—according to accidental circumstances—but practically a company of disciples united to each other by common faith in the gospel, and their kindred affection for each other as the followers of Christ. They realized the joy of communion in proportion as they were severed from
† 1 John i. 7.

service and all vain superstitions. When this separation was complete they became like the primitive Christians, a "sect everywhere spoken against." The brand of sectarianism may often be taken as the measure of their distance from the errors and pollutions of Rome. Hence the necessity, in reading ecclesiastical history, to guard against the effect produced, unconsciously, by the use of terms. The "Church," originally under-^{Right use of terms.} stood in its application to those who are "called to be saints," is often loosely employed to designate an association of men the most corrupt in principle, and the most vicious in conduct, who heaped every epithet of scorn and contempt on those who would not be partakers of their iniquity.

The WALDENSES* are prominently noticed by historical writers in connection with the period now under review. The rise of these interest-^{Waldenses.} ing people is involved in some obscurity. The question of their antiquity is one indeed of antiquarian controversy. According to the most authentic account, the Waldenses were the^{Peter Waldo.} followers of PETER WALDO,† a rich merchant of Lyons. His mind being deeply affected by the death of one of his fellow citizens in a public assembly, his thoughts were seriously turned to the subject of personal religion. Being interested in the gospels he was accustomed to hear at church, he felt a strong desire to know more of the Scriptures, and employed two ecclesiastics, Stephen of

* Jean Leger, Rainer, Neander, viii. 424; Raynaldus, xxii. 1332, p. 542; Jones, Maitland.

† Rainer, Neander, viii. 24, seq.; Raynaldus, John XXII., 1332, p. 542.

Evisa or Ausa, and Bernard Yoros, to translate them into the vernacular. Accepting the counsel given by the Saviour to the young ruler in a literal sense, Waldo devoted his wealth to the support of the poor, and began with his associates to preach in the streets. The Archbishop of Lyons prohibited these proceedings, but the earnest evangelicals replied that they "must obey God rather than man." Waldo had not the intention, it is said, of separating from the Romish Church, but aimed at what he supposed to be apostolical purity within it. Two of his company were sent to Rome in order to submit some specimens of their translations from the Scriptures to the Pope (Alexander III.), and to ask his sanction for the work in which they were engaged. The proposal was received with ridicule, though at the Lateran Council held at the time, the Waldenses were not included in the heretical parties who were condemned.

In 1184 they were put by Pope Lucius under perpetual anathema. After this separation from the Romish communion, their principles were more distinctly avowed, and their course of action became more decided.

Waldenses
separated
from Rome,
1184.

Their progress was rapid in Lombardy and Provence; they had more schools than the Roman Catholics. Their preachers disputed, and publicly, and they so far increased in numbers that their enemies were kept under restraint. The probability is that in religious sentiment there was some diversity among them, but it is admitted by all that they evinced remarkable eagerness to become acquainted with the Holy Scriptures.

Labourers and artisans, after the work of the day, devoted their evening hours to study, and it is stated that a poor Waldensian used to swim across a river in wintry nights to reach a person whom he sought to win to a purer faith.*

St. Bernard says, "Their heresy is this: they say that the Church is only among themselves, because they follow the ways of Christ and imitate the apostles." Their character and influence.

"If you ask them of their faith, nothing can be more Christian-like; if you observe their conversation, nothing can be more blameless; and what they speak they make good by their actions."

De Thou, a Romish writer, in the "History of his Own Time," says of the Waldenses, "Though they were, as some report, convicted, yet they positively fortified themselves, saying that, in the affairs of religion, *God was to be obeyed and not man.*"

"Becoming hated and execrated *in consequence* by all men, they wandered up and down in Languedoc, Lombardy, and especially among the Alps, where they lay concealed and secure for many years."† In this protected seclusion they had the opportunity and the disposition to examine for themselves the Word of God, and as religious societies gained coherence and spiritual strength, not to be found among the exiled "Spirituales." It would only be in accordance with what we might expect from the infirmities of human nature, if in

* Rainer, Wald., 264.

† Thuani Historia sui Temporis, tom. i., lib. vi., sec. 16, and lib. xxvii.; Neander, viii. 39; Cesarius et Heisterbach Distinct, lxx. 138.

the first excitement caused by voluntary emancipation from the mental thralldom of Popery, they made mistakes in some of their interpretations of Scripture, and adopted theories wanting in soundness and sobriety. Extracts, no doubt, may be produced from their writings indicative of aberration to a certain extent, but as a body they "contended earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints." Their influence was widely spread, and chiefly from their zeal in diffusing the Scriptures. By means of translations made by Waldenses who came from Montpellier, the poor people at Metz became acquainted with the contents of the sacred volume. The ignorance of the clergy was extreme. The people groaned under their oppressions,* and hailed with thankful gladness the truth that would make them free, and to give to them support and consolation in their bitter trials. Innocent III., writing not only to the bishop and chapter, but to all the faithful under their jurisdiction, says :—

Christian converts at Metz. "Our venerable brother, the Bishop of Metz, has informed us by his letters, that in the town and diocese of Metz, a multitude of laymen and of women, carried along by an *immoderate desire of knowing the Scriptures*, have caused to be translated into the French language the gospels—St. Paul's epistles, moral reflections on the Book of Job, and several other works, with the guilty and senseless view of meeting together, men and women, in secret assemblies, where they are not afraid of preaching to one another (*sibi invicem prædicare*). They go even so far as to despise those who refuse to join them, and they consider them as strangers. Reprimanded

* Supplication du Pueble de France ; Du Puy's Hist. du Differend entre le Pape et Philippes le Bel. Appendix.

on this subject by their parish priests, *they have withstood them in the face, endeavouring to prove*, by arguments drawn from Scriptures, that they could not be prevented from carrying on these assemblies; some of them even despise the simplicity of their pastors, and when these set forth to them the way of salvation, they reply in secret that they find sounder doctrines in their works, and that they can talk more wisely.”*

The charges made against the Christians who met secretly in Metz are very similar to those the primitive disciples had to meet, when brought before the Sanhedrim at Jerusalem. It is extremely interesting to observe that they asserted the right to meet for worship on the ground of Scripture.

That they preferred the teaching of their own humble pastors to that of the priests, can excite no surprise, when it is borne in mind what childish fables were substituted by the Romish clergy for the preaching of the gospel.

Innocent III. had the good policy to advise the clergy to proceed with care in trying to reclaim the Bible readers, and, in order to secure their attention the more readily, he recom-
Letters of
Innocent
III.
mended them to use the words of Scripture in reasoning with them. “While it is the duty of prelates,” he says, “to keep a careful watch that the heretics may not succeed in laying waste the Lord’s heritage, they should also be extremely cautious how they attempt to gather up the tares before the time of harvest, lest, perchance, the good fruit may be plucked away also. While no tolerance should be shown to heresy, it was important also that no harm should be done to a pious simplicity,

* *Epistolæ Innocenti Romani Pontificis*, lib. ii., Epist. 141, vol. ii. p. 432
Hallam’s Middle Ages, vol. iii. p. 387.

lest the simple should be turned into heretics." The Pope himself tried his best arts of mild persuasion.

"Although," he writes to the people, "the desire of learning how to understand the Scriptures was not to be found fault with, but rather deserved commendation, yet it was a thing not to be approved of that they should hold their meetings in private, that they should take upon themselves the office of preaching, ridicule the shallowness of the priests, and avoid the society of those who would take no part in their meetings; for that God, who is the true light that enlighteneth every man that cometh into the world, so abhors the works of darkness, that He gave express command to the apostles, when He sent them forth to preach the gospel to all the world: 'What I tell you in darkness, that speak ye in light' (Matt. x. 27); whereby He manifestly gives it to be understood that the gospel should be preached, not in secret conventicles, as it is by the heretics, but, after the Catholic manner, publicly in the churches." "A special preparation," continued his Holiness, "was necessary, in order to penetrate into the deep things of the sacred Scriptures. For this reason a particular order had been instituted in the Church; and since this had been done, it was not for every one indiscriminately to arrogate to himself the office of teacher, but it depended on the fact whether a man was entrusted with it by the Lord. Should it be affirmed, however, by any one, that God had commissioned him to undertake such a calling in some invisible way, and that such an immediate call was superior to any human call, to this person it should be answered: 'As this is a hidden thing, it is not sufficient barely to affirm it—which, indeed, any false teacher might do concerning himself—but he must prove it, either by a miracle, or by some express testimony of Holy Scripture.'" "No doubt," he added, "knowledge is pre-eminently necessary for priests, in order that they may be enabled rightly to discharge the office of teachers; yet the more learned ought not to undervalue the less educated priests, but always honour them in their spiritual vocation."

The voice of the tender and faithful shepherd

was simulated by the Pontiff to perfection, but the people were not deceived by its blandest tones. They met in secret for the same reason that the disciples assembled at Jerusalem, "the doors being shut," and they looked not for miraculous signs of the vocation of ministers, but to the proofs supplied in the gifts and graces of the Holy Spirit.

Innocent III. soon laid aside the garb of the friend or the pastoral adviser, and directed a commission to examine all who were suspected of meeting together privately for worship. It was found that they were in some way connected with the Waldenses. Their assemblies were broken up, and their books committed to the flames; but the progress of the truth was not entirely arrested. The "good seed" grew secretly. The "handful of corn" on the "top of the mountain" was scattered in many provinces, though it is not within our power to trace the course of its silent germination.

Innocent
III. in his
true cha-
racter.

We return to the Franciscan friars.* A company of them landed at Dover in 1224. Their strange appearance excited as much astonishment as a party of paupers from a "casual ward" sent on some religious mission might do in our own day. Presenting themselves at the house of a nobleman soon after their arrival in England, he put them into custody, under the suspicion that they were either spies or impostors; and no wonder. The garb of a begging friar, which, by the skill of the painter, with careful grouping, can be made picturesque, was

Landing of
Franciscans
at Dover,
1224.

* Monumenta Francisca. Brower.

then regarded as a mere novelty of eccentric squalor. A cloak of coarse material, fastened with a common rope, was his chief article of dress. Bareheaded, and not very particular as to cleanliness, his appearance to a stranger was not in itself attractive. Yet we are assured by the sentimental admirers of the order, that the Franciscan was just the missionary required by the age.

The luxurious and indolent monks kept in their pleasant abodes in the rural districts, enjoying the loveliness of natural scenery, and were seldom seen in the comfortless towns. The Friars Minors, on the contrary, made their way to the most wretched quarters of the poor, and were most at home amid the scenes of extremest misery. They entered the hovels of filthy and neglected lepers to share their humblest morsel. Their own dwellings were made of mud and wood, so slightly constructed that a carpenter could erect a dwelling for the fraternity in a single day. Their singularity arrested attention, and, surprised by this exhibition of peculiar sympathy, the people flocked around them with eager interest.

The progress of the order was rapid as it was superficial. The new school of spiritual physicians received a hearty welcome because of the homeliness of their manners, but they brought with them no healing medicines.

Superficial
teaching of
the Fran-
ciscans.

Their numbers were speedily multiplied, but there was nothing in their teaching to give firmness and solidity to character. It was at first extremely agreeable to find in their preaching nothing to task the intellect or to burden the

memory. The great problems of humanity were left untouched by them; and instead of the doctrines of divine revelation, the wearied and suffering people were regaled with romantic stories of apparitions and pretended miracles, interspersed with pleasant allegories and legends suited to the taste of a community that had little knowledge of books. St. Francis, their great exemplar, was no friend

indeed to learning, human or divine.

*St. Francis
no friend to
learning.*

“Father,” said a provincial minister to him,

“it would be a great comfort to me to have a Psalter, and the Minister-General permits it, but I should not like to use it without your conscience.” “When you have got a Psalter,” replied St. Francis, “then you’ll want a breviary; and when you have got a breviary, you will sit in your chair as a lord, and you will say to your brother friar, ‘Fetch me my breviary.’” Suiting the action to the word, that his ghostly counsel might be the more impressive, the saint took ashes from the hearth, and laying them upon his head, rubbed his hand round and round, as if he had been washing his cranium, repeating all the while, “I am your breviary—I am your breviary.” Then turning to the astonished novice, St. Francis said, “Brother, I too was tempted as you are, by the possession of books; and wishing to know the Lord’s will in this matter, I took the Gospels, and prayed to Him that He would show me his will in the first page to which I should turn; and when I had finished my prayer and opened the book, I met with these words, ‘To you it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of God, but others in parables.’ How much happier he who has made himself barren for the love of

God. Such a day will come, when men will throw books out of the windows as useless.”* The sense of Scripture the curious saint managed to turn topsy-turvy, and it may be easily imagined that his credulous disciples were in this respect quite as successful. Struck with their apparent devotedness, and admiring their wonderful progress, Gros-tete,† Bishop of Lincoln, hailed the preaching friars as useful auxiliaries. If they sowed chaff instead of seed-corn, there was at least the appearance of spiritual husbandry that gave him satisfaction, and he was sanguine enough to expect an abundant harvest from their untiring exertions. The foreign priests imported to England by the Pope were so vile in character, and the traffic in livings carried on by his mercenary agents so shameful, that the honest prelate was glad to find pastors with the semblance at least of sanctity.

“I am not disobedient,” he says, in a letter to his Holiness, “to the apostolic precepts; I am bound by the divine command to obey them. Our Saviour saith, ‘Whosoever is not with me is against me.’ Our lord the Pope appears to be his type and representative. It is impossible that the sanctity of the Apostolical See can be repugnant to the authority of Jesus Christ. The *non-obstante*‡ clause overflows with uncertainty, fraud, and deceit, and strikes at the root of all confidence between man and man. Next to the sin of Antichrist, which shall be in the latter time, *nothing can be more contrary to the doctrine of Christ than to destroy men’s souls by defrauding them of the pastoral office.*

* Monumenta Franciscana, Brewer, pref. xxx. xxxi.

† Browne’s Fascic. ii. 250; Pegge’s Life of Gros-tete; Luard’s Gros-tete Epistolæ.

‡ The form by which all rights, laws, or prohibitions that might interfere therewith were suspended.—Gieseler, ii. 255.

"Those who serve their own carnal desires by the fleece and milk of the sheep of Christ, and do not minister the pastoral office to the salvation of the flock, are guilty of destroying souls. Two enormous evils are in this way committed. In one respect, they sin directly against God himself, who is essentially good—in another, against the image of God in man, which by the reception of grace is partaker of the divine nature. For the holy Apostolical See to be accessory to so great wickedness, would be a terrible abuse of the fulness of power—an entire separation from the glorious kingdom of Christ, and a proximity to the two princes of darkness (the devil and antichrist). No man faithful to the said See can, with an unspotted conscience, obey such mandates, even if they were seconded by the high order of angels themselves.

"On the contrary, every Christian ought to oppose them with all his might. It is therefore in perfect consistence with my duty of obedience, that I withstand these enormities so abominable to the Lord Jesus Christ, so repugnant to the holiness of the Apostolical See, and so contrary to the unity of the Catholic faith. I say, then, that See cannot act but to edification, but your provisions (those of the Pope) are to destruction. The Holy See neither can nor ought to attempt any such thing—for flesh and blood, and not the Heavenly Father, hath revealed such doctrines."*

Grostete was half-paralysed — on one side of him there seems to have been the glow of spiritual life, on the other the torpor produced by the Romish system. His letter throughout is full of contradictions. He speaks of the Pope as the "type and representative of Christ," whilst in the same breath he roundly taxes him with fraud and deceit. The truth is—the would-be conscientious bishop was almost bewil-

Semi-paralysis of Grostete.

* M. Paris, p. 870; Burton's Annals, 326–405; Brown's Fascic. Append., p. 400; MS. Trinity Col. Camb.; Cotton MSS.; Knighton Script, Decem. col. 2436; Foxe, vol. ii. p. 524, A.D. 1253.

dered. Abuses multiplied around him in every direction. Monks and friars, canons and chapters, all went wrong. Grostete had to pass constitutions that his clergy should not visit the most
 Trouble with his clergy. notorious haunts of vice, nor publicly play at dice, engage in drinking bouts, or hire out their services for mass in noblemen's halls amongst ribald minstrels, and the degraded wretches who were drawn together in such places in their disgraceful revels. The profligate priests set their anxious diocesan at defiance. He addressed to them a pamphlet on the right of episcopal visitation, which furnishes a characteristic example of Scriptural interpretation common to the prelatical teachers of his times.

The gradations of ecclesiastical rank, and the consequent necessity of obedience on the part of subordinate orders, he attempts to prove from the counsel of Moses to Jethro, the history of Jacob and Laban, Adam and Eve, the Deluge, the tower of Babel, David among the sheep, Samuel on his circuit, the elder brother in the parable of the prodigal son, Aaron and his leprosy, and the case of the adulteress. He closes this argumentative medley with insisting that on the visit of the bishop there should be the ringing of bells.* The hortatory

address of Grostete appears to have
 Discourse of Grostete's at Lyons, 1250. produced little practical effect. Thwarted by his refractory clergy, he made a journey to Rome that he might know for himself the real condition of the papal court. In the year 1250, he opened his mind freely in a

* Grostete Epistolæ., cxxvii., Luard.

discourse he sent to be read at an ecclesiastical assembly at Lyons.

"The bad shepherds," he said on that occasion, "are the cause of the infidelity, schisms, false doctrines, and bad conduct throughout the world. As the great work of Christ, for which He came into the world, was the salvation of souls, and the great work of Satan is their destruction, so the shepherds, who as shepherds take the place of Jesus Christ, if they preach not the Word of God, even though they should not lead vicious lives, are antichrist, and Satan clothing himself as an angel of light." "And the guilt of the whole lies at the door of the Roman court, not simply because it does not root out this evil, when it alone is both able and bound to do so, but still more because itself, by its dispensations, provisions, and collations, appoints such shepherds; and thus in order to provide for the temporal life of an individual exposes to eternal death thousands of souls, for the salvation of every one of whom Christ died. To be sure the Pope, being the vicegerent of Christ, must be obeyed. But when a Pope allows himself to be moved by motives of consanguinity, or any other secular interest, to do anything contrary to the precepts and will of Christ, then he who obeys him, manifestly separates himself from Christ and his body, the Church, and from him who fills the apostolical chair, as the representative of Christ. But, whenever a universal obedience is paid him in such things, then comes the true and complete apostacy—the time of antichrist. God forbid that this chair should at some future day, when true Christians refuse to obey it in such things, attempt to compel obedience, and thus become the cause of apostacy, and of an *open schism*."*

ADAM DE MARISCO, the friend of Grostete, wrote to him a letter of sympathy, which reveals his pitiable condition, "I know not," he says, "how a shepherd can escape the reproach of a hireling, if under a hard government and malice of the times, he abandons the Lord's fold. Gladly, therefore, did I cast my eyes on that passage in your letter wherein you say, 'I do not propose at this present to give way, but by the help of the Lord I will proceed as I have begun.' Blessed be God! who will never fail to

Sympathy of
Adam de
Marisco.

* Brown's Fascic., vol. ii. p. 252.

bridle the persecutors of his faithful servants, be they cruel as they will. I am so depressed that scarcely any spirit remains in me when I think on this plague which attends your high position, staining the fair reputation of your house with intolerable infamy, with the filthiness of a vile life, and the opprobrium of the stews. I can only call them foolish clerks in name, and totally without experience in managing the business of a great prelate. Let not your blessed circumspection linger in the correction of such.”*

The mental condition of these disconsolate men, sighing in vain for reformation, is remarkable. They understood distinctly from the Word of God, that for the preservation of the flock of Christ there must be vigilant pastoral care. They reasoned well out of the Scriptures on this point, but with strange inconsistency they expected from priests, notoriously corrupt and scandalously vicious, the fidelity and care of true Christian ministers. Amid these papal corruptions it was impossible to exercise the pastoral office, as described in the New Testament.

Clearly the much admired apostles of ignorance, however popular, had effected no real improvement in society. Grostete was among the first to see that the doctrine of St. Francis, as to the duty of destroying books, was erroneous. “Study,” he said to the friars, “or else for a certainty the same lot will befall you as has befallen all other religious men, who are walking, to their shame, in the darkness of ignorance.”

Agnellus, the first Franciscan provincial in England, so far departed from the rule of the founder,

* Adam de Marisco; *Monumenta Francisca*; Brewer, pref. xc. Epi. t. xlix.

as to build a school in the Fraternity of Oxford, and appointed Grostete to read lectures.*

The Aristotelian philosophy at that period was supposed to be the perfection of wisdom, beyond which it was dangerous presumption to venture. Uniformity was demanded in scholastic learning, as well as in theology.

Scholastic
uniformity
exactd in
the univer-
sities.

A statute of the University of Paris enacted that "no master or bachelor of any faculty shall presume to read lectures upon any author in a private room, on account of the many perils which may arise therefrom; but shall read in public cases, where all may resort, and may faithfully report what is there taught: excepting only books of grammar and logic, in which there can be no presumption.†

A rescript of the papal legate assigns the limits of human enquiry. "Whereas, as we have been informed, certain logical professors treating of theology in their disputations, and theologians treating of logic, contrary to the command of the law, are not afraid to mix and confound the lots of the Lord's heritage; we exhort and admonish your university, all and singular, that they be content with the landmarks of the sciences and faculties which our fathers have fixed; and that having due fear of the curse pronounced in the law against him who removeth his neighbour's landmark, you hold such sober wisdom according to the apostles, that ye may by no means incur the blame of innovation or presumption."‡

Enquiry
limited by
papal re-
script.

* Pegge's Grostete, 23; Kennett's Par. Antiq., 213.

† Tenneman, viii. 461.

‡ Tenneman, viii. 461; Whewell Philos. of Inductive Sciences, ii. 157.

There has always been this tendency to intellectual cretinism in the votaries of Romish superstition, and but for the "sound mind" called into existence by vital Christianity, our country must have sunk hopelessly into a condition of inanity and semi-barbarism, that still lingers where the papal sway has been least interrupted. Some, however, are of opinion that the sources of information open to the people in the Middle Ages, were more abundant than is generally imagined. In proof of this we are pointed to the libraries known to have existed in England, the number of students taught in the universities; but there is no proof that the friars, whose special mission it was to instruct the people, possessed more books than they could easily carry in their wallet. The greater part of them gladly followed the example of St. Francis, and dispensed with reading altogether. We are reminded, moreover, that from the circumstances of their position, like new settlers in a remote and uncultivated region, men of every class were compelled to exercise their ingenuity and skill in work, which in a different condition might have been done for them by artisans trained to different occupations. The division of labour was of necessity very limited. The courts of law, in the absence of other means of instruction, were more frequented than in modern times, and the people, we are told, took great interest in the proceedings. The peasantry, it is said, became acquainted with foreign countries from the continual recurrence of military expeditions. The vassal might be called at any time to follow his liege lord to France or to Palestine.

This theory of mediæval civilization is pleasing, but it rests, we fear, only on a slender basis.

The ignorant squatter, like the Maroons of Jamaica, can initiate no progress like that of the intelligent emigrants who take with them into remote regions all the habits of advanced civilization, as we find in the settlers from New England, who create in a single generation villages and towns in the prairie or the forest, left uncultivated for ages. The fanatical crusader and the wandering minstrel could not raise society to a very high degree of mental attainment; and we question whether there was much, either in the disputes on canon or common law, with the logomachies of the Schoolmen to add to the stores of general knowledge. A certain degree of mental activity, no doubt, was awakened by the discussions on Scotus, Occam, and the rest of the doctors, which was better than the previous stagnation. As they wrote in Latin, the medium of intellectual communication common to Europe, their dialectics gained general attention, but their subtle refinements and word-spinning prevented the sure advancement of learning. The estimate of them given by Lord Bacon is well known. "It is not to be omitted," he says, "that some men, swollen with emptiness rather than knowledge, have laboured to produce a certain method, not deserving the name of a legitimate method, since it is rather a method of imposture; which yet is doubtless highly grateful to certain would-be philosophers. This method scatters about certain little drops of science in such a manner that a smatterer may make a perverse and

ostentatious use of them with a certain show of learning. Such was the art of Lully, which consisted of nothing but a mass and heap of words of each science, with the pretension that he who can readily produce the words of any science shall be supposed to know the science itself. Such collections are like a rag shop, where you find a patch of everything, but nothing which is of any value.”*

Groseteste made an earnest effort to stimulate the friars to the pursuit of useful learning. He persuaded Roger Bacon, ROGER BACON (born 1214)† to enter the Franciscan order. This diligent, though secret, student devoted himself to the work of experimental research.

Forty years, he tells us, were spent by him in his solitary cogitations and enquiries before he had an opportunity to unburden his mind of the vast accumulation of ideas on all subjects. Whilst the rest of the indolent fraternity went out to beg, or stayed within the convent to count their beads, His studies. Friar Bacon was absorbed in laborious thought, trying to solve problems in mathematics or metaphysics, to master the rules of grammar and logic, and to apply, as far as he had the needful apparatus, tests in chemistry. He must have appeared to the dull slaves of monastic routine around him as the most profitless drone in their community. The stores of information he acquired he was compelled to keep secret as so much stolen property. By some means, his studious habits became known to Clement IV. when Bishop of Sabina. On his elevation to the Papacy, he sent a command

* Works, vii. 296.

† Emile Charles, Vie et Ecrits.

to the learned Franciscan for the production of any treatises he had made, with the requisite dispensations for his protection. The heavy-laden philosopher wrote in a sort of transport to express his unbounded gratitude <sup>Befriended
by Clement
IV.</sup> for the opportunity given of communicating his opinions to the world. His sense of obligation spoiled him, we must admit, as an ecclesiastical reformer. His Holiness became to him, for the time being, an object of greater admiration than all the saints in the Romish calendar. Writing evidently in a state of great excitement, he says: "The head of the Church has sought me, the unworthy sole of its foot; the vicar of Christ and the ruler of the whole world has condescended to ask a favour of me, who am scarcely to be numbered among the units of the world. I feel myself elevated above my ordinary strength. I conceive a new fervour of spirit." *

The Pope was under some misapprehension as to the existence of any written works from the pen of Friar Bacon. All the lore he had was as yet lodged only in his own brain.

"When your Holiness wrote to me," he says in explanation, "on the last occasion, the writings you demanded were not yet composed, although you supposed they were. For whilst I was in a different state of life (that is, before he had entered the order of the Franciscans), I had written nothing on science: nor, in my present condition, had I ever been requested to do by my superiors—nay, a strict prohibition had been passed to the contrary, under penalty of forfeiture of the book, and many days' fasting on bread and water, if any book written by me, or belonging to my house, should be committed to strangers. Nor

* Incipit Epistola Rogeri Bacon ad Clementem Papam, Brewer I. p. 7.

could I get a fair copy made, except by employing transcribers unconnected with the order; and then they would have copied my works to serve themselves or others, without any regard to my wishes, as authors' works are pirated by the knavery of the transcribers in Paris. And certainly, if it had been in my power to have communicated my discoveries freely, I should have composed many things for my brother scholar, and for others my most intimate friends. But as I despaired of the means of communicating my thoughts, I forbore to commit them to writing. When, therefore, I professed to you my readiness, you must understand that it was for writings to be composed, not for such as had been composed already." *

There was another difficulty—money was wanted. Roger Bacon had spent 2000 livres in his investigations before he joined the Friars Minors,† but, as a Franciscan, he had no property to pay for the work required; nor could he give personal security, for the same reason. His impecuniosity threatened to prove a fatal obstacle. He turned to the friends of the Pope—the noble and the wealthy; but none of them would advance the sum required, for they had no faith in the speculation.

"I told them," he writes to Clement IV., "there was a certain business of yours to be done, which I must needs get finished for you in France, and the execution of it would require a large sum of money; but how often I was looked upon as a begging impostor; how often I was put off; what confusion I suffered within myself, I cannot express to you. Distressed above all that can be imagined, I compelled my friends—even those who were in necessitous circumstances—to contribute what they had, to sell much of their property, and to pawn the rest; and yet, by reason of their poverty, I frequently abandoned the work. Frequently I gave up in despair, and refused to proceed."

* Rogeri Baconis, *Opus Tertium*, Brewer J., cap. ii. p. 13.

† Wood, *Antiquitatis Univ. Oxon.*

How the needful pecuniary supplies were obtained, we are not informed. The Pope was too much occupied himself for correspondence with the needy scholar amid the throes of authorship. "I am not surprised," says Friar Bacon, in his simplicity, "that you overlooked the expenses, as you sit at the top of the world. You have so much and so many things to think of. No man can reckon up the anxieties which crowd upon your mind." * The Pope excused.

The friars enjoyed the misfortunes and perplexities of their presumptuous brother. Their own minds were free and vacant, and they spent their lives in delicious ease, whilst this martyr of science and philosophy carried a load under which Atlas might have fainted. "You forgot," said Roger Bacon to the Pope, "to write to my superiors in my excuse. As I could not make known to them the secret, they threw obstacles in my progress." "Why," they asked him, "could you not be contented to do as others do? Why trouble yourself and the world about matters of which the world knows enough already?" Taunts of the Friars.

The proposal of the philosophical friar to enter upon a course of painstaking investigation was altogether unwelcome. They preferred to go blindfolded. "Experimental science—the sole mistress of speculative sciences," said Friar Bacon, "has three great prerogatives among other parts of knowledge. First, she tests by experiment the noblest conclusions of all other sciences; next, she discovers respecting the notions which other sciences deal

* Brewer, Pref., p. xxviii.

with, magnificent truths to which these sciences of themselves can by no means attain; her third dignity is, that she, by her own power, and without respect of other sciences, investigates the secrets of Nature." *

Need we wonder that the credulous fraternity who had so long repeated by rote their inane and senseless stories, were vexed by this proposal of honest intellectual labour? Murmur, however, and oppose as they might, Roger Bacon seized his opportunity to finish the work in which he gave the result of his inquiries and reflections on grammar, mathematics, geography, chronology, music, optics, experimental philosophy, alchemy, and theology. He completed his arduous task in fifteen months. The outflow of the mental reservoir containing the influx of forty years was not, we may be sure, without some worthless admixtures; but new subjects were presented for thought and further investigation.

Roger Bacon was fully sensible of the defects in the studies of "Latin Christendom." He enumerates the prevailing "faults" arising from the predominance of philosophy over theology; the undue regard paid to the earlier Schoolmen; errors in the Vulgate; ignorance of Latin and Greek; and want of acquaintance with the branches of learning needful for the elucidation of Scripture. "Although," he says, "the principal study of the theologian ought to be the text of Scripture, yet, for the last fifty years, theologians have been principally occupied with questions, as all know, in tractates and Summæ—

Defects in
the studies
of Latin
Christendom.

* *Opus Tertium*, c. iv., p. 18.

horseloads composed by many, and not at all with the most holy text of God ; and, accordingly, theologians give a readier reception to a treatise of scholastic questions than they will do to one about the text of Scripture." *

He denounced the evils that existed in all orders of priests. Wherever the clergy congregated, scandals were rife ; and the sacred profession was brought into contempt amongst the laity from the pride and luxury of their religious teachers. He claimed exemption from the yoke of authority in matters of opinion and conscience. " I speak not," he says, " of well-grounded and true authority, which God has transferred to the Church, or which results from actual merit and worth, as found among the holy philosophers and prophets who earnestly and reverently investigated wisdom ; but of false and arrogant authority, springing from the thirst of power and the ignorance of the multitude." " All wisdom, as to its principle and source, is contained in the Scriptures." " As the ancient people of God were governed by the literal precepts of the Old Testament, so the Christian Church should be ruled by the spiritual sense of the Old Testament given in the New Testament."

Scandals of
the Clergy.

Mental in-
dependence
of Bacon.

With all his interest in science and philosophy, Roger Bacon felt the necessity of a light far clearer and more certain than that which could be furnished by human reason, however strengthened by exercise or informed by the increase of scientific knowledge. The neglect of the Word of God had sunk the teach-

* Bacon, *Compendium Philosophiæ*, Brewer, Pref. lv.

ers of his age into a state of grovelling imbecility. Keenly alive to the defects of the prevailing scholasticism, Roger Bacon says: "Never was there so great appearance of wisdom, nor so much exercise of study in so many faculties, in so many regions, as for this last forty years. Doctors are dispersed everywhere, in every circle, in every burgh, and especially by the students of two orders (Franciscans and Dominicans), which has not happened for about forty years. And yet there was never so much ignorance, so much error."

In common with all who desired reformation, Roger Bacon was alive to the defective preaching of his times. "The greatest part of our pre-
Conceited and artificial preaching. lates," he says, "having but little knowledge of divinity, and having been but little used to preaching in their youth, when they become bishops, and sometimes are obliged to preach, are under the necessity of begging and borrowing the sermons of certain novices who have invented a new way of preaching, by endless divisions and quibblings, in which there is neither sublimity of style nor depth of wisdom, but much trifling and folly unsuitable to the pulpit. May God banish this conceited and artificial preaching out of his Church, for it will never do good, nor elevate the hearts of the hearers to anything that is good and excellent."*

The Franciscans were naturally offended at the publication of such views, and condemned the author of them severely. They com-
Opposition of the Franciscans. plained that he would commit the Bible into the hands of the people, instead of allowing the

* Hannay's Wycliffe, etc, p. 122.

sacred oracles to be consulted only by the sacerdotal order in the privacy of the cell or of the cloister. They charged him, above all, with being in league with the devil, and cast him into prison as a sorcerer. He applied in vain for deliverance to Nicolas IV., one of the successors of his patron, Clement IV. It was only after an imprisonment of ten years that, through the intercession of several men in power, he regained his freedom. He returned to England, and died at Oxford in 1294. Roger Bacon, amidst the perplexities of his position, expressed his opinions with caution, accommodating himself in some respects to the temper of parties for whom his treatises were written. Almost lost at intervals in the maze and medley of the subjects he discussed, his testimony in reference to religious truth was wanting in unity and in the force arising from consistency. Yet, here and there in his miscellaneous writings, he enunciated an important principle, that in due time produced a powerful effect. His emphatic utterances on the sufficiency of Scripture as the rule of faith, especially were not forgotten. The question now raised was not, as at a former period, "*Where is the Scripture?*" but "*What saith the Scripture?*"

Imprisonment and death of Roger Bacon.

1294.

The example of reverent and patient investigation given by Roger Bacon exerted an influence in secret on the minds of many students in the universities, that led to a far deeper and closer examination of the Word of God. The mind of Europe was beginning to move toward the light from heaven.

CHAPTER III.

THE warning contained in the writings of Grostete, that the heretical course of the Pope would cause a schism in the Church, was justified in the event. Resistance to papal aggression made its appearance sporadically. Various agencies, too manifold to be distinctly indicated, hastened the crisis.

Free
preaching
movement
in Bohemia.

The most remarkable of them was the movement for free preaching, originated by a few earnest men in Bohemia.* It is not important to trace the particular instrumentality by which their attention was directed to the necessity of practical reformation. The writings of Grostete were read by the Bohemians, and they may have been visited by Waldensian teachers, but we have no clear information as to the effect of this foreign influence. It is certain that native energy was evinced in the cause of social reformation greater than any that as yet we have had to notice. We emerge from the sunlit mist of mysticism, and escape the jargon of the Schoolmen, with the follies of the Franciscans, to direct our atten-

Domestic
mission.

* Palacky *Geschichte Böhmens*, Jordan *Vorläufer des Husitentums in Böhmen*, Krummel; Neander, ix.

tion to a domestic mission of eminently practical character, and worked with extraordinary vigour.

Millicz,* a Moravian of Cremsia (Archdeacon of Prague, and secretary to the Emperor Charles IV., the King of Bohemia), was its founder. Millicz, an evangelist. His conviction of the truth was intense. He hailed it with wonder and delight. In the ardour of the first discovery he exclaimed, "The light is come." Of necessity he became an earnest witness. It was impossible for him to conceal the treasure he had found, or to remain silent with a burden upon his spirit of such momentous importance. He relinquished his official emoluments in 1364, and devoted himself to the work of 1364. an evangelist. His preaching, though despised at first, excited, eventually, general attention. Stimulated by the interest awakened, he preached sometimes three, four, and even five times daily, in different churches. On his return home at the close of the day, weary and exhausted with his labours, "he was surrounded and followed by multitudes, seeking spiritual consolation and advice," which he imparted to all with kindness and affection. At an advanced period of his life he learned German, for the purpose of extending his labours also to the German population, and he now preached in this language as well as his own. To the students of the University of Prague, and to the learned, he preached in the Latin language, and was listened to by eager crowds. He had to lend his sermons for the students to copy; and thus they became multiplied. MATTHIAS OF JANOW says of him, "Having

* Balbinus Miscell. Hist. Bohemia, decade i. lib. iv., pp. 45, 46.

been a simple priest and secretary at the prince's court, before his experience of this visitation by the Spirit of Christ, he grew so rich in wisdom and all utterance of doctrine, that it was a light matter to him to preach five times in a day—namely, once in Latin, once in German, and then again in the Bohemian tongue, and this publicly, with mighty fervour and a powerful voice, and he constantly brought forth from his treasures things new and old.” With true Christian heroism he selected the worst quarter of Prague, called “Little Venice,” as the sphere of evangelizing effort, with a view to reclaim its depraved population. He commenced with simple and very limited operations, gradually extending them until the entire waste was recovered. He succeeded at first in converting twenty licentious women, and induced them to dwell in one house. He found devout women in good circumstances, who were willing to look after them, and he took unwearied pains himself in promoting their improvement. The success of this preliminary effort led him to found a Magdalen hospital on a large scale, and to enlist the sympathy and active co-operation of others. In the midst of this abounding usefulness he felt a sense of insufficiency for the work of the ministry, that led him to retire for a season in order to gain time for deeper reflection, and to acquire further knowledge. “I was in the spirit,” he says, “and meditated on what is written in the Revelation : ‘To him that overcometh will I give of the tree of life;’ and I knew that if I overcame the sin that is in me, I should taste of the

Home
for the
reclaimed.

tree of life, or of the understanding of the Holy Spirit, and I prayed often, that Almighty God would give me the Holy Spirit, and anoint me with his unction, that I might not fall into any error, and might enjoy the taste and perfume of true wisdom, so that I might deceive none, and be deceived by none, and wish no longer to know anything but what is necessary for me and the holy Church.”* During the time of his voluntary seclusion his thoughts were directed to the corruptions existing in the Church of Rome. Oppressed by a sense of the abuses he witnessed continually, he was convinced that the reign of antichrist, predicted by the last survivor of the apostles, had commenced, and in the year 1367 he took a journey to Rome that he might bring the subject before the attention of the Pope. His Holiness was absent from the city, and whilst waiting for his return the spirit of Millicz was stirred within him, and he began his mission by an address to the people. He was arrested in consequence, and cast into prison, but found an opportunity to write a treatise, entitled, “*Libellus de Antichristo*.” He was liberated on the return of Pope Urban to Rome, and on his arrival at Prague he resumed his labours, and not satisfied with the little good that could be effected by his own personal efforts, he founded an association composed of two or three hundred young men, all of whom resided under the same roof with himself, were trained under his influence and by his society. He copied the books which they were to study, and gave them devotional

Journey of
Millicz to
Rome, 1367.

Return to
Prague—
Institution
for young
men.

* Neander, ix. p. 241.

books to copy for themselves, for the sake of multiplying them. Everything was to be free; to flow spontaneously from the one animating principle by which all were to be governed. An internal tie was all that held them together: no outward discipline or rule, no uniformity of dress. The disciples of Millicz soon distinguished themselves by their serious, spiritual lives, and by their style of teaching.”* In the support of this free institution for ministerial training, Millicz exhausted all his personal pecuniary means, and then solicited the contributions of his friends. Such efforts could not be continued

Death of
Millicz,
1374.

without exciting opposition. The proceedings of Millicz were reported to the Pope Gregory XI. He was cited to Avignon in 1374, but died there while his cause was still pending.

CONRAD OF WALDHAUSEN was a man of kindred spirit with Millicz. He devoted himself, in 1345,

Ministry
of Conrad,
1345.

to the work of preaching, and for fifteen years laboured with extraordinary diligence. He began his ministry in Prague, in 1360, and as the crowd of people could not find

1360.

accommodation in the church of St. Galli, of which he was the minister, he preached in the open market-place with great fidelity and success. Repenting of his earlier course of life as a monk, he said, “Oh, had I but known it ten years ago, I would then, for the glory of God, have devoted myself entirely to study; but from henceforth I will consecrate my whole life to study, to the cultivation of a prayerful spirit, and to

* MS. report of Janow.

preaching." The monks tried to arrest him in his energetic career, but protected by the emperor, he continued to labour in Prague with impunity, until his death in 1369. Died 1369.

The cause of reformation advocated by Millicz and Conrad, was adopted by MATTHIAS OF JANOW, not, however, as a preacher, but as a writer of considerable power. Janow was the son of a Bohemian knight, and influenced by the preaching of Millicz, he became a profound and diligent student of the Holy Scriptures. He speaks of the Bible as his dearest treasure, to which his heart was bound in perpetual affection, and from Janow a student of Scripture.

which he would never be separated from youth to age, his companion in travel and his counsellor at home, solving difficulty, imparting solace in trial and persecution, and giving rest to the spirit in weariness, relief under the heaviest pressure, calmness in the midst of tumult, and courage in the severest conflict. He studied the words of inspiration until he felt their sacred glow. We have an instance of this in his meditations on the prophecies of Ezekiel. The imagery contained in the eighth chapter of that mysterious book he appropriates to describe the abominations of the Papacy. In his work, entitled, "*De Sacerdotum Monachorum Carnalium Abominatione*,"* we are led through the "chambers of imagery" in which we may see what "every man" is "doing in the dark." Chamber of imagery.

To this task of exposure, Janow tells us that he was summoned by a divine call that he could not disobey. "Son of man," said the voice from

* Hist. et Monument Joh. Hus., Norimb., i. 473, seq.

heaven, "penetrate the innermost recesses of this mystery of iniquity, search into the most secret customs and practices of men, and fathom the depths of Satan. Enter these gloomy caverns with the sword of the Spirit.

"At that time," he continues, "my mind was surrounded by a thick wall. Sleeping in the leaden atmosphere, I became as one enchanted at a splendid banquet, and reluctant to move. I thought of nothing but what delighted the eye and charmed the ear, till it pleased the Lord Jesus to draw me as a brand from the burning. And whilst I, the worst slave to my passions, was resisting Him in every way, He delivered me from the flames of Sodom, and led me into the place of sorrow, of great adversities, and of much contempt. There first I became poor and contrite, and searched with trembling the Word of God. I began to admire the truth in the Holy Scriptures, to see how in all things it must be exactly fulfilled; then first I began to wonder at the deep wiles of Satan, to see how he darkened the minds of all, even those who seemed to think themselves the wisest. The holy crucified Jesus raised my mind that I might see how men were lost in vanity; and, reading further, I clearly understood the abomination standing securely and on high in the holy place of sacrifice. I wept and trembled. Then I was penetrated with a new, subtle, unwonted, powerful, but a very blessed fire, which still continues to burn within me, and is kindled the more in proportion as I lift my soul in prayer to God—to our Lord Jesus Christ the crucified.

"When I relax discipline and become remiss, my mind is soon beclouded and rendered unfit for spiritual service, until I return with weeping and supplication to the Lord Jesus—the true Physician, who alone can restore the soul and lead us into the path of entire and willing obedience. He re-enchants the holy fire, and in the midst of the people establishes my feet on a rock, and prepares me for every good work.

"Obeying the voice of my God, I have dug the wall in a threefold manner—by preaching to the people daily, searching for the truth with constant care, and writing these things with great solicitude by day and by night.

"I know with perfect certainty that if this work of mine be of man, it will be destroyed. So let it perish, for the wisdom of the flesh is enmity to God. But if this work be of God, and by the spirit of the crucified Jesus, then I am equally certain, however for the present it may seem to suffer, it cannot be overcome."*

Janow saw that things were tending inevitably to ecclesiastical dissolution, and that the elements of moral corruption in the Papacy would never coalesce with the principles of vital Christianity.

After a review of the iniquitous practices of the priests and monks, he adds: "It will be seen how incongruous and impracticable must be the attempt to unite with the Head, that is Christ Jesus, the body and members of Antichrist; and, on the contrary, the body and members of Christ must desire to be joined to Him as their proper Head, and feel a growing repugnance to be associated with the head of Antichrist, or to Antichrist in any form. The members of Christ will turn instinctively to Him as their supreme Head and proper centre of attraction. Where He is, they ^{Effective} ^{affinities.} will congregate. On the contrary, the members of Antichrist, by the power of assimilation, will turn to the Head most in accordance with their own character and natural inclinations. The more men are addicted to the pleasures of the world, the more vain, avaricious, and tyrannical they become; the more eagerly they will seek to be in relation to a head in unison with their own debased moral condition. 'They shall every man turn to his own people.' People who are cruel and oppressive will be enslaved under government as arbitrary as

* Opp. Hus. i. fol. 376, *seq.*

themselves, just as the corrupt and vicious people in the time of the judges desired to have Micah for their priest. Humble Christian people will, from their opposite predilections, choose bishops of the same meek and gentle spirit." "*The Church of God will not continue to exist, unless restored to its pristine purity and dignity. It will not be reformed unless it is divinely renewed.* Some expect a renovated people from a reformed priesthood, but how can a pure ministry spring from a corrupt and degenerate people?"

Janow is convinced that a people, rather, will be prepared by the Lord himself—created anew in Christ Jesus. This renovation will be effected in the time divinely appointed, and as the result of successive dispensations. Until it is accomplished there will be suffering and conflict, with the frequent recurrence of the judgments of God, for the trial of his Church and the subjugation of his foes. With respect to the government of the Church, Janow proposed that all should revert to the simple rules of Christ. "I have myself," he tells us, "come to the settled conclusion, that it would be a salutary thing, and calculated to restore peace and union to Christendom, to root up the whole plantation, and once more sum up the whole in that simple precept, to bring back the Christian Church to the sound and simple beginnings, where it should be needful to retain but a few, and those only the apostolical laws."* He would have the Lord's Supper administered in both kinds, and in its original simple and profitable form.†

Simple
rules of
Christ.

* Neander, ix. p. 285.

† Jordan, pp. 59, 68.

The unity of the Church, Janow maintains, is unity in Christ. There was a response to these views on the part of the people. "It is already well-known," he says, "that the spirit of devotion and the glow of charity are reviving among the communities, and the words of our sermons rise to life again, because the Spirit of Jesus works in them."

An interesting community of Bible readers arose at this period in Holland, corresponding in its two-fold character with the peculiarities of the Dutch people. The drowsy serenity of the level landscape, made familiar to us by the pictures of Ruysdael, Hobbema, and Cuyp, has a tendency to lull the lethargic into a state of dreamy repose. The peculiar situation of the country, as below the tide-mark, with its artificial embankments and exposure to inundation, imposes, on the other hand, the necessity for vigilance and the most strenuous exertions.

Bible
readers in
Holland.

The "Brethren of the Common Lot," who formed their communities at Zütphen, Deventer, and other places, included members marked by opposite characteristics. Some gave themselves to tranquil contemplation, and were lost in the reveries of mysticism. Others were actively employed as copyists of the Scriptures, and became energetic in the defence of the truth received from their daily perusal; common sympathy was awakened amongst the members as their knowledge of Christian doctrine increased.

Brethren of
the Com-
mon Lot.

THOMAS HAMERKEN, born in 1380, at Kempen—a small but pleasant town on the Rhine, not far from Cologne—was a member of one of these com-

munities. He is best known as THOMAS A KEMPIS. Though retaining his connection with the Romish

Thomas
a Kempis,
b. 1380.

Church, he breathed the spirit of a sincere disciple of Christ. "Man," he says, "cannot by his own strength rise above his own level, and can only become fully participant of God, by God imparting Himself to him, and infusing into him his Spirit and love.* It is the truth that makes man free, but the highest truth is love.† Divine love, imparting and manifesting itself to man is grace. God sheds his love into the heart of man, who thereby acquires liberty, peace, and capability for good things; and, made partaker of this love, man reckons as worthless all that is less than God; loving God only, and loving himself no more, or, if at all, only for God's sake.‡ He loves all things in God, and is filled with the purest spirit of devotion, the most active zeal to do good. It lightens the heaviest loads, and smooths the inequalities of life. It bears the burden without feeling it, and gives sweetness and relish to the bitterest things. It prompts to great enterprises, and kindles the desire of higher and higher perfection.§ True love to God, inasmuch as it springs from the renunciation of self, and the deepest sense of needing Him, likewise includes in it the purest humility; and humility is the fountain of wisdom, more than lofty knowledge.||

We do not find in this charming devotional writer what is termed by the Apostle Paul, "The

* Soliloq. Anim., xxiii. 8, p. 50.

† Ibid. x. 8, p. 18.

‡ Concio, xvii.; De Amore Jesus, p. 193.

§ De Imit. Chr., iii. 53.

|| Concio, xvi.; De Quadrages, p. 193.

proportion of faith," or any clear definition of evangelical doctrine. It might seem that, despairing of any improvement in external ecclesiastical relations, men of this order found relief in solitary religious contemplation; and, since they could effect no outward re-
Wanting in the "proportion of faith."

form, they were glad to occupy themselves in self-scrutiny, and in tracing the workings of the inner spiritual life. The influence of their writings, nevertheless, was extensive and salutary. A certain obscurity remained amidst the light of their beautiful speculations; but it is very refreshing, amidst the spiritual dreariness of their times, to find such gleams of heavenly truth, and to be brought into a company of devout men far removed in spirit and in aim from those who were described by St. Bernard as "traitors" and "demons."

There was, on the part of some of the brethren of the common lot, a practical and sober estimate of the importance and value of the Scriptures.

Take for illustration the writings of GERHARD ZERBOLT, born about the year 1367, at Zütphen, an ancient town at the junction of the Berckel with a branch of the Rhine called the Yssel. He was librarian at Deventer, and wrote a work upon the ability of reading the Bible in the mother tongue. "This treatise,"* says Ullman, "being intended for the learned, is written in Latin, but in Latin of great purity, with sound practical sense, and freedom from all fanaticism; insists, on the one hand, that *all laymen should instruct and edify them-*

Gerhard
Zerbolt,
b. 1367.

Treatise on
reading the
Bible in the
mother
tongue.

* Ullman, vol. ii. p. 108.

selves out of the Scriptures; and, on the other, no less earnestly warns them against religious curiosity, and the unhealthy inclination to dwell by preference upon those parts of Scripture which are dark and mysterious. There is in the Scriptures, he says, a sound and simple doctrine, accessible to all, for the comprehension of which no deep search or disputation is necessary, but which, on the contrary, is evident of itself to every reader, without great pains or learned controversy. On the other hand, Scripture also contains another doctrine, sublime, profound, and obscure, for understanding which diligent enquiry and more penetrating research are requisite. To quote his own words: ‘Sacred Scripture does not merely train and instruct a particular class, but every man in his own station. For sometimes it prescribes to all men general rules of faith and practice. In other and most places it addresses its doctrine to some one particular class. Here it teaches beginners, there informs the more advanced, and anon moulds the life of the perfect—thus adapting itself to the moral condition of all. Accordingly, Scripture has been given to all in all ranks, and given for this end—that they who have, as it were, become fugitives from themselves, and strangers to their own hearts, and were not able inwardly to discover their sins, might at least discover them outwardly, by means of the picture which the Scripture holds up. What sensible man, then, will dare to say that the laity sin when they use Scripture for the purpose which God gave it to subserve—viz., teaching them to discover, and heartily to repent and forsake their sins? Why should they not be

partakers of the divine law, as well as of other common blessings of God—seeing that among these the law and the Holy Scriptures, as peculiar in their kind, occupy the chief place? The laity, therefore, cannot with justice be excluded from this benefit and divine consolation, which imparts life and nourishment to the soul.’”

Zerbolt saw clearly that the Holy Scriptures were intended to “make men wise unto salvation,” and that, in relation to their highest spiritual interests, the rules given by inspiration of God are at once simple and complete. But he was not prepared to apply the same perfect rule to matters relating to the constitution and order of the Christian Church. The time was not come for this advanced step. It was needful that those who were emerging from the thick darkness of Romish superstition should become gradually accustomed to the light, in order to gain confidence for further progress. The form of elegant Latinity in which the views of Zerbolt were presented rendered them attractive to scholars. His books were welcomed on this account by many a solitary student, and the report of their literary excellences would lead many to seek after them with prudent avidity. The impression gained ground that the Bible was sufficient as a practical guide for truth and duty; and, as the conviction grew secretly in thoughtful minds, courage was inspired to attempt the required reformation.

CHAPTER IV.

RIGHTLY to estimate the force of the principles brought under review by those who desired the removal of corruption and a return to apostolical simplicity and purity in the Church, we must consider the powerful resistance offered to every practical attempt at reformation. It is a point of some interest to ascertain the cause of this opposition, and in particular for the employment of physical force in the suppression of every opinion or practice not in conformity with the laws and usages of the Church of Rome. There is nothing in the New Testament to justify the employment of brute force, either for the defence or the propagation of the truth. "The weapons of our warfare," said the apostles, with perfect sincerity, "are not carnal." There was a sufficient reason for the repudiation of all such agency in the nature of the case; for it can never satisfy a man whose faith is enlightened and firm, that those whom he would gain as converts, should merely pretend to believe either in the hope of gain or from fear of suffering or loss. There was no system of religious belief or worship extant in the world at the time of the Incarnate Redeemer, but

Resistance
opposed to
reformation
— its cause.

that of Christianity, that refused decidedly every kind of alliance with the temporal power. No other system could maintain its ground, resting only on its own internal evidences as the means for securing conviction. Persecution, therefore, in the Church of Rome must be traced to another origin than that of the teaching and example of Christ and his apostles. We can be at no loss, indeed, to account for the introduction of the temporal sword by the Pontiff and his satellites. *It was borrowed from Pagan Rome.* Under the Pagan system minute ceremonial was rigidly imposed, irrespective of any particular doctrine. Religion, as the word signifies, was to the Romans simply a tie, a material bond of their own invention, and one to which every member of the community was compelled to submit without enquiry or dispute. The chief desire of every worshipper was to appease the gods by a routine of formal observances. The people were made to believe that a prayer composed of certain words had been known to prevail in past times, and to act as a spell against the wrath of their divinities. The terms of this form of enchantment were to be transmitted from father to son. Every family had some such formula, but in order to success, not a word must be changed, nor a syllable, and it must be intoned in the manner prescribed, or its efficacy would be entirely lost.*

Christianity
alone dis-
claims
alliance
with State
power.

Temporal
sword bor-
rowed from
Pagan
Rome.

Nor was this all. The outward acts of worship

* Coulanges *Cité Antique*, chapitre viii.; Denys, i. 75; Varron, vi. 90; Cicero *Brut.*, 16; Anlus Gellius, xiii. 19.

were to be alike minutely observed without the slightest deviation. The gestures and the costume of the priests were regulated with the greatest nicety. In approaching one of the gods, the worshipper must have his head veiled, turning to another he must be uncovered, for a third the lappet or fold of the toga must be thrown over the shoulder. In certain acts of worship he must have his feet bare. Some prayers would have no efficacy unless the worshipper, as soon as he pronounced them, turned himself from left to right. The nature of the victim, the colour of its hair, the manner in which it was killed, the form even of the knife, the kind of wood which was used to roast the flesh, all this was fixed for each god by the religion of each family or of each city. The least failure in these particulars vitiated the service and rendered it an act of impiety. The Senate of Rome degraded the consuls and dictators who had committed any error in a sacrifice. Liberty of thought, with respect to religion, was absolutely unknown. Every city must conform to all the rules for worship, figure in all the processions, and take part in all the religious questions. The city had been founded upon a religion, and constituted as a church. In a society established upon such principles, individual liberty could not exist. The citizen was subordinated in all things and without reserve to the State. He belonged to it entirely. Religion, which had given birth to the State, and the State which contained within itself religion, sustained the one and the other, and became inseparably blended. These two powers associated and confounded, formed a power almost superhuman, to which the soul and

the body were equally subservient. When Constantine, by force of arms, subjugated the Pagan nations to a nominal Christianity, he could only secure their allegiance by the adoption of the system of control to which they had before been accustomed. The emperor himself became Pontifex Maximus.

He was bishop of things external, making the bishops, whose jurisdiction was within the Church, the instruments of maintaining his universal supremacy. The papal power, as we have shown, ultimately claimed both the temporal and the spiritual sword. The question then, practically, in the suppression of imputed heresy, was not one of faith, but of supreme authority. The Sovereign Pontiff would allow no diminution of his more than imperial sway. As Constantine used the bishops to keep the people in subjection, the Pope employed kings for the same purpose.

Emperor
Pontifex
Maximus.

Lucius III. issued a decree in 1183, which exhibits in a striking manner the nature of the papal domination, and the forces by which it was upheld. "In order to put an end," so runs the document, "to the evil of the various heresies which have begun to break forth in modern times in most parts of the world, the power of the Church ought to be aroused. We, therefore, supported by the power and presence of our most dear son Frederic, the Emperor of the Romans—*semper Augustus*—with the common consent of our brethren and of the other patriarchs, archbishops, and many princes, assembled from various parts of the world, have, with the general sanction of the present decree, risen up against those heretics."

Decree of
Lucius III.,
1183.

All who should have presumed to preach either publicly or privately without the authority of the apostolic see, or of the bishops of the diocese, with all who should presume to think or to teach otherwise than the Romish Church teaches and observes, all who should receive such persons, show them countenance or favour, were to be placed under the same ban. The clergy who should deviate from the prescribed rule were to be deprived of every ecclesiastical office and privilege, and delivered to the secular power. Laymen were to be given up to the temporal judge, to be punished at his discretion. "Those who shall be found to be only suspected by the Church, shall be subjected to like sentence, unless they shall demonstrate their innocence." The relapsed were to be given up for punishment without further hearing, and the goods of the condemned persons were to be applied to the services of the churches to which they belonged. Any ecclesiastic found to be remiss in the matter was to be suspended three years. A commission of fit persons was appointed to go round every parish once a year, or oftener, in quest of suspected ecclesiastical delinquents. They were empowered to call upon three or more persons, or if it were deemed expedient on the whole neighbourhood, to take an oath, "that if any shall know that there are heretics in the place, or any persons holding secret conventicles, or differing in life and manners from the common conversation of the faithful, he will make it his business to point them out to the bishop or archdeacon." If the suspected person, when cited before the bishop, should refuse to swear, he was to be dealt with as

heretical, and punished accordingly. Men of all ranks and conditions were sworn to aid in this service on pain of forfeiting every honour or privilege they might possess. At the synod of Toulouse (1229) it was determined that ^{Synod of Toulouse, 1229.} "any person, lord, bishop, or judge, who shall spare a heretic, shall forfeit his lands, property, or office; and every house in which a heretic is found shall be destroyed. Heretics, or persons suspected of heresy, shall not be allowed the assistance of a physician, or of any of their associates in crime, even though they may be suffering under a mortal disease. Sincere penitents shall be removed from the neighbourhood in which they reside: if it is suspected of heresy, they shall wear a peculiar dress, and forfeit all public privileges, until they receive a papal dispensation. Penitents who have recanted through fear, shall be placed in confinement."*

This may be considered as the model law of the papal Church. It provides for the enforcement of its unreasoning authority in the manner ^{Model Law.} the most ingenious, comprehensive, and complete. It is entirely consistent with the assumption of infallibility, and with merciless fidelity it exacts corresponding obedience. It proposes to annihilate conscience, and, in that which chiefly concerns every human being, to leave no place for individual conviction, and to allow no opportunity for personal choice. That this terrible machinery of spiritual despotism did not utterly sap the moral strength of the nations can only be explained by the

* Conc. Later, iv. 3 (Mansi, vol. xxii. p. 986, etc.); Conc. Tolosan, i. 28, (Mansi, vol. xxiii. p. 194); Landon's Manual of Councils, p. 594.

greater force of vital Christianity, secretly working as leaven in society in the most perilous times. Agents were not wanting to execute with the utmost rigour the most sanguinary decrees. Lest bishops should be tempted to show some favour to those who were dependent on them, the work was devolved upon foreign monks. The Dominicans gradually became possessed of this office, and it was looked upon as their peculiar inheritance. They offered themselves as the bloodhounds of the Church, adding to the ferocity of their natural instinct the keenness and fatal certainty of grasp acquired only by special training. No plan of spoliation or rapine was proposed by the priestly tormentors, in which willing instruments for its accomplishment were not readily found.

Dominicans
the blood-
hounds of
the Church.

Innocent III., in 1215, levied princes and people *en masse* for the extirpation of the Albigenses. The leader of the expedition, in the tone of perfect complacency, said: "We have spared neither age, nor sex, nor rank; we have smitten every one with the edge of the sword."

Crusade
against Al-
bigenses,
1215.

But, notwithstanding the desolation caused by them, victory did not remain with the fiendish oppressors. Strong in faith, and clothed in the armour of light, faithful witnesses for Christ, men and women, continued to confront their infuriated adversaries. If, with the martyrs of the primitive age, they had to say, "For thy sake we are killed all the day long, we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter," they could at the same time add, "In all these things we are more than conquerors."

The eye of their divine Leader was ever upon them. They might pass in rapid succession through the gory path of martyrdom, but they did not become extinct. Intervals of rest were given by the interposition of Providence, and many were sheltered in deep obscurity.

A succession of papal edicts kept up the spirit of cruel intolerance, but we have no need to quote them in detail. The inquisitor was in constant communication with his Holiness, and received instruction and stimulus for his sanguinary work.*

We may understand, at least in the retrospect, the necessity for the severe ordeal to which these faithful witnesses for the truth were subjected. With the loss of Christian individuality, under the influence of the Romish system, there could be neither a living faith nor sound morality. Distinctive Christian principles were almost eaten out of the community. The eclipse of faith was nearly total. A hollow formalism was substituted for the power of godliness. A winnowing process, therefore, was needed to separate the chaff from the wheat. Christianity, in an age so corrupt and debased, could only be made manifest in the spirit and conduct of men who, by the loss of all things, and the endurance of the extremest trial and suffering, gave proof of their sincerity that none could doubt. They shone "as lights in the world, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, holding forth the Word of life."

Whilst torturing Christendom into the semblance

* Letter of John XXII. to the Inquisitor at Marseilles, 1332, in Raynaldus, No. 31.

of perfect unity, the Papacy itself was rent in twain. Instead of a single occupant of the Romish see, Peter was represented by two heads of the Church, Schism in the Papacy. not in a state of accommodating quiescence, but in fierce and prolonged antagonism. The unseemly spectacle became a scandal and a nuisance. Several leaders of marked ability in connection with the University of Paris directed their energies to abate the evil, and to assign limits to the papal power. The controversy had a quickening effect on the minds of the students, and though there was no consistent application of scriptural principles in the questions agitated, thought was awakened, and the mental incrustation, which had been so long impervious to the truth, was at least partially broken up.

PETER D'AILLY,* of Alliaco, born in 1350, at Compiègne, was one of the most distinguished of the anti-papal reformers at this period. D'ailly, 1350. He became Chancellor of the Paris University. At an early part of his public career he gave lectures on the "Importance of Studying the Holy Scriptures," in which he maintained that the Bible alone was the everlasting rock upon which the Church was founded; and that it could not be Peter and his successors, because of their human infirmities. He was, however, too much involved in diplomacy with the ruling powers, ecclesiastical and temporal, to adhere very strictly to the principles for which he had contended. The honours of the cardinalate prevented him from pursuing his

* Von der Hardt, ii. 224, *seq.*; Hallam, *Middle Ages*, ii. 240; Cave, *Hist. Liter.*

inquiries into the doctrines of the New Testament to an issue that might have proved an obstacle to the attainment of the objects of his ambition.

NICOLAS DE CLEMANGES,* born in 1360, who became Rector of the University, adopted the views of D'Ailly, whose lectures he attended. Clemanges, b. 1360. He was employed as secretary to Pope Benedict XIII., at Avignon; and having in that capacity given offence to the King of France, he concealed himself for a time among the Carthusians of Valprofond, then with those of Fontaine-du-Bosc. In these retreats he studied his neglected Bible. He sought his salvation in Christ alone, as set forth in the gospel, and attributed the declension of the Church to the absence of scriptural knowledge. He felt the necessity for more instructive and earnest ministration of the gospel. "In preaching," he says, "we ought to imitate Christ. On preach- ing. For sometimes Christ taught his disciples, sometimes the multitude, sometimes the Pharisees, occasionally He taught in the synagogue, often in the temple, sometimes on the land, sometimes on the water, sometimes on the mountains, sometimes on the plains; oftentimes He taught many together, then again individuals. Who should not say, then, that the best method is the one which Christ, the perfect pattern of all that is good, practised unceasingly while living in the flesh? But what is meant by being a teacher? What else than this, with the right art, with experience and zeal for the cure of souls, to teach others? For it is not the

* Opp. Ed. Lydias.

square cap, nor the higher pulpit, that makes the doctor."

After citing the words of Paul, 2 Tim. iii. 16, "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness," he says: "Of little profit to that end are the things in which the majority exercise themselves at the present day; things which may indeed in some way or other serve to sharpen the intellect, but can neither warm the heart, kindle emotion in the soul, nor supply it with any nourishment, but leave it cold, hard, and withered."*

A work entitled "*De Ruina Ecclesiæ*," often ascribed to Clemanges, is now pronounced to be the production of some other writer. The Ruina Ecclesiæ. views expressed in this treatise indicate the course of thought that now began to prevail.

The complaint is made by the author that the priests, from their indolence and vice, were everywhere spoken of with contempt. Their ignorant and scandalous lives made them a pest to the community. Though piety was not utterly extinct, the number of the sincerely religious was reduced to the lowest point. There was a greater depravation of manners than in the times of Paganism, so that faith was scarcely to be found, and the mass of the people were sunk into a state of scepticism and of grovelling sensuality. The writer despairs of the restoration of real unity.

* *De Studio Theologico*, in D'Acherry's *Spicilegium*, vol. i. p. 478; Neander, ix. 82.

“As regards the restoration of the Church,” he says, “rent asunder by this unhappy schism (of the Pope’s), it is in vain to hope that anything of this sort will be brought about by us. This can never be accomplished by man’s work—never by any human act whatsoever. This thing requires, of a certainty, another hand. And if ever a union of the Church shall take place, the physician that effects it must be He who gave the wound, for the wound is so grave and incurable as to be incapable of healing by any other pains. A great deal has been done on this subject—a great deal said—many embassies have been undertaken on account of it. But the more we have deliberated and proposed, the more complicated and obscure the matter has grown; for God mocks our pains, because we fancy ourselves able by our own prudence and skill, without his help, to accomplish what is his work alone. And to this—that we are unworthy of receiving peace from Him, and of having peace, for the Lord God has said, ‘There is no peace to the wicked.’”*

Despair of
restoring
unity.

JOHN GERSON,† who in turn became Chancellor of the University of Paris, was a reformer of the same class with D’Ailly and Clemanges. He saw clearly the vices that prevailed, but fearing to correct them with an unsparing hand, lest greater evils should arise, he proposed to allow the priests to continue in their state of concubinage, until some remedy might be gradually applied.‡

Gerson.

* Opp., ii. 885, *seq.*, etc. etc.

† Neander, ix. 81.

‡ Gerson’s Opp., tom. ii., Propositiones, etc. ; Neander, ix. 107.

In common with many other partial reformers, Gerson felt the necessity for a better order of preaching than that of the Mendicant Friars. He says, in his discourse before the Council at Rheims—that the bishops regarded preaching as a function unworthy of them, and committed the work to mere hirelings, who, preaching only for lucre, did it with extreme negligence. “It is true,” he adds, “that by this means sermons are become more frequent, but then nothing is a greater rarity than to hear good gospel-preaching. The Word of God is adulterated and corrupted; they make a trade and sordid gain of godliness; seeds of error and superstition are scattered about, and the people are fed with impertinent and frivolous tales.”*

Better
preaching
wanted.

It did not occur to Gerson, however, that true preaching can only be found where there is on the part of the preacher deep and unfeigned conviction, with fervent zeal and yearning compassion for souls, together with a disposition on the part of the hearers to welcome the truth, and to yield to its power. He insisted on limitations to faith, incompatible with the sincerity that constrains a man to speak with unction and force.

The scandals caused by the rival Popes became intolerable. Cardinal Philargi, Archbishop of Milan, and afterwards nominated Pope, in his sermon before the Council of Pisa, said in reference to them: “You know how these two wretched men calumniate one another, and disgrace themselves by invectives full of rant

Philargi's
sermon
before the
Council of
Pisa.

* Tom. ii. 542; Lenfant, ii. 305.

and fury. Each calls the other Antipope, obtruder, Antichrist." *

The members of the Sacred College indulged in similar licence. Cardinal St. Marci called the ignorant prelates "Mitred asses."

At one time the Church of Rome had three Popes contending by violence and the basest intrigue for supremacy. So desperate was the state of things that Gerson proposed to get rid of the scandalous Popes at any cost. "If," he says, "those two or three will not yield, it remains only to resort to stronger measures: to depose them and expel them from the communion of the Church, and to withhold our obedience from them. But still, if by these means the highest interest of the Church cannot be promoted, then *we must bring about the holy concord of the Church by cunning, by fraud, by force of arms, by promises, by presents, and money: finally, by resorting to imprisonment and the taking of life, or by any other means whatever whereby the unity of the Church can be promoted.*" †

Yet there was no ground to expect that the deposition of the Popes would effect a real purification, for the whole court was corrupt. "There," ^{Romish} says Gerson, "the daily talk is of castles, ^{corruption.} of territorial domains, of the different kind of weapons, of gold, but seldom or never of chastity, alms, righteousness, of faith, or holy manners: so that the court, a spiritual one, has become a secular, devilish, tyrannical court, and worse in manners and civil transactions than any other." ‡

* Neander, ix. 113.

† Opp. Gerson, tom. ii. Neander, ix. 127.

‡ De Modis Reunendi, p. 197; Neander, ix. 132, 133.

The ideas of Gerson himself on moral subjects were evidently very much confused, when he recommended fraud and violence as the most effective means for removing the crying evil. But the case was desperate. Rome had become a cesspool of iniquity, and the moral malaria rising from it spread through the nations of Europe. With this deadly corruption was combined the most atrocious violence. Ambitious men contended for the papal chair, reckless of consequences, and unscrupulous as to the means by which to secure their object. Once in possession of the coveted supremacy, rival princes entered into league with them, secretly or openly, to gain a temporary superiority at the cost of their impoverished and harassed subjects. Amidst these fratricidal contests, the messengers of sacred truth went forth "bearing precious seed." We can only catch a glimpse of them at intervals, for, though earnest and devoted, they moved quietly, and in sequestered paths. Attention was often diverted from them by the fierceness of the contest in which their opponents were engaged between themselves. When the "door of opportunity" was opened, they pressed through with ardent zeal; when it was closed, they retired to commune with their Divine Leader, and to watch the signal for the renewal of their arduous but truly blessed service.

CHAPTER V.

OXFORD, in the fourteenth century, had little of the architectural beauty which has made its streets of colleges and quadrangles so attractive in modern times. It resembled a fortress rather than a university. During a certain portion of the year it was enclosed with water, out of which certain islands arose, on which castles were erected for defence. It was, nevertheless, even at that period, a seat of learning resorted to by foreigners, and of growing celebrity. Provision was made in four hundred seminaries for thirty thousand students.* We find here JOHN DE WYCLIFFE † in 1340. He entered as a commoner in Queen's College at the age of sixteen. In 1361 he was elected Warden of Baliol, and took his degree of Doctor in Divinity in 1372. He was authorized by this qualification to give lectures as a public teacher of theology in the University. The incidents in the public career of Wycliffe are well known. He was the most conspicuous man of his age. We are chiefly interested in marking the course he took in the question of Reformation. Decidedly in advance of Gerson and the Parisian school, who dealt only with

Oxford in
the four-
teenth
century.

John de
Wycliffe,
1340.

1361, 1372.

* Brown's Fasic., 473, 474.

† Bas. Lewis. Vaughan, Todd; Wilkins, iii 221, 1395; Forshall's Pref., pp. ix. x.; Wilkins, iii. 229; Rymer's Fœdera, viii. §7; Purvey's Remonstrance; Bohringer, Jæger.

certain abuses, and by equivocal means, Wycliffe struck at the root of the evil; and where he could recognize a true principle, nothing could induce him to swerve from his adherence to it as the rule of conduct. We see this in his uncompromising opposition to the Mendicant Friars. In every stage of their degeneracy these locusts of society had been exposed and censured by those who suffered from their exactions; but none, before Wycliffe, had ventured to denounce their order as extraneous to Christianity, and positively mischievous in its influence. This is a point worthy of special attention, because it marks a distinct stage of progress. We are not concerned with the individual peculiarities of the reformer. Our object is to note the work he achieved. At the building of the Jewish temple, "A man was famous according as he had lifted up axes upon the thick trees." We may hear the axe of Wycliffe ringing through the forest, sparing nothing that hindered the growth of the "trees of righteousness."

Taking up, for a moment, the link of connection between Wycliffe and his precursors, we observe his allusions to Grostete. He assures us that though, in his first acquaintance with the friars, Grostete hoped to find in them useful auxiliaries, he had too much reason, in the end, to regard them with abhorrence. In proof of this, he cites a passage from one of his sermons in which he declares that "a friar is a dead body come out of the tomb, wrapped in funeral weeds, and set in motion among men by the fiend."

"Some," continues Wycliffe, "wear russet above, as a sign of their labours; and a white garment under, to signify the

purity of their mind. Others wear, over all, black funeral vestments, as a sign, they say, of their continual sorrow and pain on account of sin; and wear white clothes underneath, as the former. A third class are clad in white, both without and within, wearing russet to denote the labour they undergo for the Church. The fourth order dress, like the second, in black and white; but, in the fashion of their dress, and their form of burial, they differ from the two following, as do the first. The deformity of their appearance, they say, shows the utility of their body, and the girdle they so tie round them in a knot, that they endure a constant and distressing bodily penance. But we see not the reality of what is thus signified, since they are no prophets, but hypocrites who seduce the people, and give their attention more to the shutting up of the body than of the soul. They pretend that, by thus shutting up of the body they have presented to their view heaven and things heavenly. The plants that grow in the cloister signify the vigour of those virtues wherein they surpass all; and the tree in the midst of it denotes a ladder, along which they mount by the steps of virtue to things heavenly. But was there ever a more hypocritical lie? For they eat of the forbidden fruit in the midst of their paradise, and make drunken to the uttermost all men who follow after them."

Amongst other impositions, the Friars Minors persuaded the people that any person dying whilst wrapped in the habit of St. Francis, was sure of salvation, irrespective of his personal character or spiritual condition. Other privileges of their order might be secured by "Letters of Fraternity," which they offered for sale to the deluded multitude. They stoutly opposed the schools of learning, and succeeded in reducing the students at Oxford to one-fifth of the usual number. Evangelical preaching excited their hostility in the same degree. Though professing poverty, they contrived to become the possessors of large property. Their rules prohibited them from passing coins through their fingers, but they counted the money with a stick! Their laziness

and filth, the foolish stories and legends invented by them, and their licentious habits, roused the indignation of Wycliffe; and he denounced their hypocrisy in the severest terms.

He understood perfectly that, so long as the people were engrossed with the ridiculous and debasing sentimentalism of monkery, their attention would never be gained to truth, or to the claims of duty. He wrote therefore incessantly against the whole system.

We select one or two illustrative passages from his "Trialogue." Wycliffe speaks in the person of "Phronesis"—

"*Alithia*.—The majority of men think that the friars, as they say mass and preach and pray so much, are necessary to the holy mother Church; therefore pray tell me wherein they are contrary to the law of Christ? because they are then doubtless heretics, and ought especially to be stoned by the clergy.

"*Phronesis*.—Spare their persons. It is evident that they do all these works merely for outward show; and because of the hidden malice within their hearts, they not only hurt themselves to a considerable extent, but also other people. Yet I do not deny—on the contrary—I suppose that there are some good men among them. As for the mass, it is evident, that if they are heretics in regard to first principles, in denying that the bread is the real body of Christ, and only an accident above their comprehension, then they sacrifice unto idols. It is further certain that their saying mass is a sin unto them, even more than the sacrifices of the priests of Baal, and those of the worst kind among the idolatrous nations. And with regard to their preaching, the result shows its tendency to deteriorate the Church, for they give all their attention to rituals, flattery, detraction and falsehood, rejecting Scripture, and neglecting to rebuke sin. Who can doubt that their frivolous mode of preaching is pernicious to the Church, or that the same remark applies to their hypocritical prayers? For, according to Gregory, when the man who is sent forth to intercede is a person on his own account un-

acceptable, the anger of the offended party is only more provoked. But I shall now proceed to speak of the twelve abuses among the friars. The first is that blasphemous heresy among them, whereby they deceive the Church in the sacrament of the altar, so that, as they have deviated from the faith of the Scriptures, there are now more than four heretical schisms among the four orders. And the fact that they hold opinions so diversified, is a manifest proof that their doctrines are erroneous.

“If we take their whole occupation into consideration, it is evident that they are useless persons in the Church; for the introduction of their heresy, as wanting in the authority of Scripture, can be of no value. They imagine that they devour daily the entire body of Christ in its very substance, and that they swallow it through their mouth in the same quantity in which it exists in heaven, because, as *they say, the body of Christ is naturally entire as regards every particle of the accident which they so consecrate*. Thus the friars, disseminating their falsehood, walk with a froward power; for they lie not against those whom they hate, or those who do them a service, but concerning themselves and the Lord Jesus Christ.”*

Wycliffe proceeds in the same strain to enumerate eleven other abuses. In another treatise he extends the indictment to fifty counts.

To all these allegations the defender of the order replied: “The Mendicant Friars have the express sanction of his Holiness the Pope, and their privileges have often been confirmed by special decrees.” But all this, in the judgment of Wycliffe, had no weight against the law of Christ.

“The order of the truly catholic religion,” he says, “which Christ instituted transcends infinitely all these private orders; for as one patron is to another patron, so is one order to another—but Christ, our patron, infinitely exceeds the patron of these orders.” “If the man who favours, or mainly supports these orders, should be called by their peculiar patron or founder, these four sects of mendicants should be called papal friars rather than

* *Dialogus*, xxvi.; *Tracts and Treatises*, 202, 203.

Dominicans or Franciscans, for Dominic is said to have apostatised from his own altar, or he holds the rule of Augustine unchanged. Francis, again, is said to have compiled sermons so incongruous, that his disciples are ashamed to exhibit his rules. But it is particularly by collecting the rules of their sect from the Popes, as jesters obtain their mantle, that these men give disposition to their order, which has been so often changed.

"Concerning the two other sects, it appears still more plainly, that by often changing their customs, they have made but unsteady progress, like boats driven to and fro in a shoreless sea.

"This feeble attempt, then, to establish their order is a failure, and accordingly we need not be surprised to find them deceiving the Church. Hence, these friars, seeing the defective grounds of their institution, declare that they hold no other than the religion and ordinance of Christ, but that they hold their religion in far more perfection than we seculars, and so observe the law of Christ more perfectly.

"But it is natural to ask them how it is that there should be four distinct orders of mendicants, or how it is that they ask the Pope to confirm their orders and corrections? And since the novel institution, which they are so singular in observing, is no special ordinance or religion, they are asked why they retain it so pertinaciously, and in what consists its advantage, or what is still their special authority for it? *Since, according to Scripture, men may not introduce such unfounded novelties beyond the religion instituted by Christ*, and they are bound to consider such orders as far inferior to that of Christ, inasmuch as Christ, our Abbot, is more worthy than their patron, our gospel rule is far more perfect, and its company of saints militant far more noble."*

Wycliffe would admit no mere palliations. He demanded nothing less than the abolition of all such fraternities.

The organizations devised by men to promote religious fellowship as an improvement on the Christian Church, in its Congregational form, were now weighed in the balance, and found wanting.

* *Dialogus*, xxv. ; *Tracts and Treatises*, 201, 202.

For a time, they appeared to promise a large amount of good, but they denaturalized men—removed them from the healthier associations of life, and exempted them from the common burdens of humanity, which afford the best occasion for salutary discipline.

The exactions of the Papacy in England, as in other countries, called forth active and resolute opposition. Parliament, in 1373, complained of the grievances connected with the papal demands, as more oppressive than at any former period. And in consonance with the wishes of the people, Edward III. appointed commissioners to remonstrate with the Pope (Gregory XI.) at Avignon. Partial concessions only were made by his Holiness, and the agitation in England on the question increased. A second deputation was appointed, to unite with a similar embassy from France, to meet the representatives of the Pope, at Bruges, in the month of August, 1374. Wycliffe was one of the delegates in this important mission, and associated with the Earl of Salisbury, Sudbury, then Bishop of London, and the Duke of Lancaster.

Exactions of
the Papacy,
1373.

Wycliffe at
Bruges,
1374.

The result of the conference was inconclusive. Partial redress was promised on the part of the Pope, but the proposed arrangement was accompanied with conditions that rendered it nugatory. The papal party resorted to the policy of evasion and procrastination. In the meantime the spirit of resistance became general.

In a petition presented in 1376, the Commons

state that the taxes paid to the court of Rome for ecclesiastical dignities, amounted to five times more than those obtained by the king from the whole produce of the realm. "For some one bishopric or other dignity," they say, "the Pope reserves, by way of translation and death, three, four, or five several times; and while for money the brokers of that sinful city, Rome, promote many caitiffs, being altogether unlearned and unworthy, to a thousand marks' living yearly, the learned and worthy can hardly obtain twenty marks, whereby learning decayeth, aliens and enemies to their land, who never saw, nor care to see, their parishioners, having those livings, whereby they despise God's service, and convey away the treasure of the realm, and are worse than Jews or Saracens." Stung with a sense of wrong, they say: "God has given his sheep to the Pope to be pastured, and not to be shorn and shaven; and that lay patrons, perceiving the simony and covetousness of the Pope, do thereby learn to sell their benefices to mere brutes, no otherwise than Christ was sold to the Jews." Glowing with indignation, they demand that "no papal collector or proctor shall remain in England upon pain of life and limb; and that no Englishman, on the like pain, shall become collector or proctor, or remain at the court of Rome."*

Parliament was dissolved, but the contest still went on. Wycliffe, the champion of the rights of his countrymen, like Marsilius, the advocate of imperial independence, questioned the authority of the Pope, and disputed the validity of his claims.

* Cotton's Abridgment, 128, 59, Edw. IV.

The clergy took alarm, and Courtenay, who had been raised to the see of London, cited Wycliffe to appear at the convocation to be held at St. Paul's on the 3rd of February, 1377, a Convocation at St. Paul's 1377. week after the opening of the new Parliament. The bishop had the precaution to protect himself by the dependents of the clergy, but the concourse of people that rushed on the occasion to Blackfriars, outnumbered the enemies of the patriotic reformer, and when he came to the cathedral in company with John of Gaunt, Duke of Lancaster, and Lord Percy, it was with difficulty that he could make his way into the presence of his judges. An altercation arose between the angry bishop and the powerful personages who appeared for the protection of Wycliffe, in the course of which the populace became excited, the assembly was suddenly broken up, and the reformer with his friends quietly withdrew.

Edward III. died in the following June, and in October, Richard II. assembled his first Parliament. The Commons submitted to the judgment of Wycliffe the following question: "Whether it would not be lawful in a kingdom, in case of Right of the nation to detain its treasure. necessity and as the means of defending itself, to detain its treasure, that it might not be conveyed to foreign nations, though even the Pope himself should demand the same, under pain of his censures, and in virtue of the obedience said to be due to him?"

Wycliffe gave a noble and satisfactory answer to these spirited asserters of national independence. The nation, he said, had this right by the natural

law of self-preservation, and also by the law of the gospel. He insisted, moreover, that the Pope should be supported, if at all, on the voluntary principle. "The Pope," he said, "cannot challenge the treasure of this kingdom but under the title of alms, and consequently under the pretence of the works of mercy, according to the rule of charity; it were no work of charity, but of mere madness, to send away the treasures of the realm into foreign nations, whereby the realm itself may fall into ruin, under the pretence of such charity.

"It appeareth also by this that Christ, the Head of the Church, whom all Christian priests ought to follow, lived by the alms of devout women, Luke viii. 3. He hungered and thirsted, He was a stranger, and many other miseries He sustained, not only in his members, but also in his own body, as the apostle witnesseth, 2 Cor. viii., 'He was made poor for your sakes, that through his poverty you might be rich.' *Whereby in the first endowing of the Church, whatsoever he were of the clergy, that had any temporal possessions, he had the same by form of a perpetual alms, as both writings and chronicles do witness.*"*

Wycliffe strongly advocated the disendowment of the Church. "This endowing against God's law doeth harm to Lords, and Clerks, and Commons, both bodily harm and harm in their souls."† "From the time of Constantine, who endowed the Church, the Roman empire decreased, and with it secular dominion. Nor

Wycliffe
advocates
disendow-
ment.

* Bodleian MSS., Fasciculus Zizaniorum.

† De Dominis Divino, MS. Trin. Coll., Dub., class C., table iii., No. 12, pp. 188, 193; Vita Sacerdotum, MS. Bibl. Bodl. Archiv., art. 3072.

is it of any avail to allege, in defence of this sin, that the emperor and others, who endowed the Church, thought that by a devotion of this nature, they should secure to themselves a manifold merit, because the apostle, from a less culpable blindness, under the same persuasion, persecuted the Church." Reform the Church and remove the endowments. "Then would be done away the simoniacal entanglement of the clergy in things temporal, the most scandalous ignorance, and the sloth and heresy which now disgrace the heritage of Christ, and by reason of this also, wars would now come to an end, and the changing of kingdoms by conquests and the iniquitous spoiling of the poor dwellers therein, since the lordship of the world would then be wholly in the power of the secular arm; and what is best of all, as Christ's word would run to and fro freely everywhere, many more would wing their way to heaven."*

This bold expression of opinion, on the part of Wycliffe, called forth the hot displeasure of the Pope. He wrote simultaneously to the king, to the Archbishop of Canterbury, and to the university, requiring instant attention to the dangerous sentiments of the reformer. The spirit of these papal missives is manifest. "Gregory," he writes, "to his venerable brother the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Bishop of London, greeting:—

"We have heard with sorrow, from many persons worthy of credence, that John Wycliffe, rector of the church of Lutterworth, in the diocese of Lincoln, *Doctor of the Holy Scriptures* (would to God not teacher of errors), is reported to have inconsiderately rushed headlong into that detestable frenzy, that he is not ashamed to advocate, dogmatically assert, and publicly main-

* Trialogus xv.; Tracts and Treatises, 174, 175.

tain, in the kingdom of England, some propositions and conclusions, erroneous and false, and contrary to the faith, which tend to subvert and weaken the whole state of the Church. *Some of them, though the terms in which they are expressed may vary, seem to reflect the perverse teaching of Marsilius of Padua, and John de Gauduno*, of accursed memory, which have been, without exception, reprobated and condemned by Pope John XXII. of blessed memory. This Wycliffe has malignantly infected with his errors several of the faithful in Christ, and led them astray from the catholic faith, without which there is no salvation. You ought to blush for shame, and suffer the keenest remorse of conscience, that through your negligence these noxious errors have gradually arisen. We cannot learn that you have made any earnest effort to suppress them; it would appear that they have been tolerated and propagated with your connivance.

“Wherefore, as we are unwilling to cloak our convictions, or to overlook evils so pernicious, which, if not speedily eradicated, may spread imperceptibly, with their deadly contagion, to the destruction of souls (which may God avert). In conformity with the apostolic writings, we commission and command you, on the receipt of these presents, that you, or either of you, obtaining secretly information as to the nature of these propositions and conclusions, copies of which we send to you enclosed under our seal, if you shall find the report to be correct, that you cause the said John, by our authority, to be arrested, cast into prison, and *carefully receive his confession on the said propositions and conclusions, and commit it under your seals (enclosed and unrevealed to any one) to us by a faithful messenger (the confession itself)*; and whatever the said John shall have spoken or written in explanation or in support of these propositions and conclusions, and whatever you shall have done in the premises; and hold the said John in chains and under safe custody until you shall have received commands in this matter from us.

“Dated Rome, at St. Mary Major,

11 Kal Junii, Anno VII.”*

In most cases the seal of the confessional is held sacred; it would be so in the crimes of murder or

* Wilkins' Concilia, tom. iii. pp. 117, 118.

of treason; but to impugn the authority of his Holiness, and to deny his right to exact from an impoverished nation an exhausting tribute, was an offence so daring and impious in the pontifical judgment that the case was made exceptional. Yet there was no necessity to ascertain the sentiments of Wycliffe through the medium of the confessional. These things were not done in a corner.

The Archbishop of Canterbury urged the Chancellor of Oxford to collect all the evidence that could be obtained to convict Wycliffe of heresy, and in the following year he was cited to appear before the Synod at Lambeth. The issue was not so favourable to the promoters of the suit as they were led, from their diligent preparations, to anticipate.

The chapel at Lambeth was besieged by an excited multitude, and a message sent for the protection of Wycliffe by the queen-mother made the clerical judges rather glad on the whole to let their prisoner go. They straitly threatened him, and imposed upon him strict silence, but it was well understood that Wycliffe had gained the day. "The delegates," says Walsingham, "shaken as a reed with the wind, became soft as oil in their speech, to the open forfeiture of their own dignity, and the injury of the whole Church."*

In a paper which he submitted subsequently to the synod, as a kind of apology, Wycliffe deals very freely with the papal claims to universal dominion :

"We know," he says, "that it is not possible that the Vicar of Christ, merely by his bulls, or by them together with his own

* Spelman, ii. 625. Walsingham.

will and consent, and that of his college of Cardinals, can qualify or disable any man. It behoves our Lord, in every vicarious operation, to maintain his primacy. Therefore, as in every qualifying of a subject it is first required that the subject to be qualified be meet and worthy, so in every disqualification, there is first required a deserving from some demerit of the person thus disqualified; and, by consequence, such qualifying or disqualifying is not made purely by the ministry of the Vicar of Christ, but from above, from elsewhere, or from some other.

"Nobody ought, except in the cause of God, to excommunicate, suspend, or interdict any one, or to proceed according to any ecclesiastical censure by way of revenge.

"There is no power granted or exemplified by Christ to his disciples, to excommunicate a subject [chiefly] for denying temporalities, but on the contrary.

"The disciples of Christ have no power to exact by civil compulsion, temporalities by censures.

"It is not possible by the absolute power of God, that if the Pope, or any other Christian, shall pretend that he binds or looses at any rate, therefore he doth actually bind or loose. It imports no less than blasphemy to suppose any one to usurp such an absolute power of the Lord's.

"It is lawful for kings, in cases limited by law, to take away the temporalities from churchmen who habitually abuse them.

"If the Pope, or temporal lords, or any others, shall have endowed the Church with temporalities, it is lawful for them to take away in certain cases, viz., when the doing so is by way of medicine, either to cure or prevent sins; and that notwithstanding excommunication, or any other church censure, since these donations were not given but with a condition implied.

"An ecclesiastic, even the Pope of Rome himself, may, on some accounts, be corrected by their subjects, and, for the benefit of the Church, be impleaded by both clergy and laity. The Pope himself is capable of sinning, and since he is our peccable brother, or liable to sin as well as we, he is subject to the law of brotherly reproof; and when, therefore, it is plain that the whole college of Cardinals is remiss in correcting him for the necessary welfare of the Church, it is evident that the rest of the body, which, as it may chance, may be chiefly made up of the laity, may medicinally reprove him and implead him, and reduce him

to a better life. God forbid that truth should be condemned of the Church of Christ, because it sounds ill in the ears of sinners and ignorant persons; for then the whole faith of the Scripture should be liable to be condemned.”*

The intrepid confessor used his privilege of administering reproof to the “peccable brother” with unhesitating freedom. Having silenced his adversaries of the Synod of Lambeth, Wycliffe's remonstrance. he rebuked his Holiness for sending his imperious letters in “a sort of answer of the Bull.” Of the Sovereign Pontiff he says: “Let him not be ashamed to perform the ministry of the Church, since he is—or, at least, ought to be—the servant of the servants of God. But a prohibition of reading of the Holy Scriptures, and the vanity of secular dominion, and a lusting after worldly appearances, would seem to partake too much of a disposition towards the blasphemous advancement of Antichrist; especially while the truths of a scriptural faith are said to be opposed to Christian truth by certain leaders, who arrogate that we must abide by their decision respecting every article of faith, notwithstanding they themselves are plainly ignorant of the faith of the Scriptures. But by such means there follows a crowding to the court of Rome, to purchase a condemnation of the sacred Scriptures as heretical, and thence come dispensations contrary to the articles of the Christian faith.”

Wycliffe closes his remonstrance in these impressive terms: “These conclusions have I delivered as a grain of faith separated from the chaff by which the ungrateful tares are set on fire. These, opposed

* Tracts and Treatises, xxxix.—xlix.

to the Scriptures of truth, like the crimson blossom of a foul revenge, provide sustenance for Antichrist. Of this the infallible sign is, that there reigns in the clergy a Luciferian enmity and pride, consisting in the lust of domination, the wife of which is covetousness of earthly things, breeding together the children of the fiend, the children of evangelical poverty being no more.”*

Wycliffe avows himself prepared to defend even “to death, if by such means he might reform the manners of the Church.” He had reason to be prepared for martyrdom, for, after this open challenge, he stood in jeopardy every hour. His end, indeed, appeared to be near without the stroke of external violence. The exhaustion arising from care and toil induced a fit of alarming sickness, Sickness of Wycliffe. from which it was not expected that he would recover. Prostrate on the “bed of languishing,” almost speechless, and as if slowly sinking to the grave, a company of ecclesiastical and civic officials were deputed to visit the reformer, in order to bring him to repentance. Four orders of friars, four doctors who came in the capacity of regents, and four aldermen of the city of Oxford called senators, entered the chamber of the fainting hero (as they supposed) about to breathe his last. The solemn delegation improved their opportunity in turns by recapitulating the offences of the dying man, telling him what shocks he had given to the world, and conjuring him at the last to give token of contrition, and make amends for the evil he had done. To the surprise and conster-

* Tracts and Treatises, p. li.

nation of the party, Wycliffe fixed his eyes on his tormentors, raised himself from his couch, and in a tone that overawed them said : “ I shall not die, but live ; and shall again declare the evil deeds of the friars.”*

Wycliffe kept his word. His natural energies returned, and with the restoration of health he devoted himself with more ardour and resolution than ever to the work he was called to fulfil. As he pressed onward in his grand and noble career, he planted himself firmly on the Word of God, and in consequence discerned more distinctly the primitive system of Church polity.

“ One thing,” he writes, “ *I confidently assert, that in the primitive Church, or the time of Paul, two orders were held sufficient—those of priests (presbyters) and deacons. No less certain am I that, in the time of Paul, presbyter and bishop were the same, as is shown in 1 Tim. iii. and Titus i. That profound theologian, Jerome, attests the same fact, see lxxxvii. Dis ca olim. For there were not then the distinctions of Pope and cardinals, patriarchs and archbishops, bishops, archdeacons, officials, and deacons, with other officers and religious bodies without number or rule. As to all the disputes which have arisen about these functionaries, I shall say nothing. It is enough for me that, according to Scripture, the presbyters and the deacons retain that office and standing which Christ appointed them, because I am convinced that Cæsarian pride has introduced these orders and gradations.*”†

Two orders only in the primitive Church.

* Baleus De Script. Brit. 369.

† Trialogus, xiii. ; Tracts and Treatises, pp. 164, 165.

Notwithstanding the burden of these controversies, and the emaciation of his frame, Wycliffe found ^{Wycliffe's} means to organize and to instruct a com-
^{preachers.} pany of preachers to disseminate the truth. That they were not loiterers in the vineyard, we have proof in the opposition they had to encounter. The boy king, Richard II., fell into the hands of the priests. Disaffection arose, and agrarian tumult. Wycliffe's preachers were charged with a sedition, and a royal proclamation was issued to silence them.

"Forasmuch," so runs the document, "as it is openly known that there are divers evil persons within the realm going from county to county, and from town to town, in certain habits, under dissimulation of great holiness, and without the license of the ordinaries of the places, or other sufficient authority, *preaching daily*, not only in churches and churchyards, but also in markets, fairs, and other open places, where a great congregation of people is, divers sermons containing heresies and notorious errors, to the great blemishing of the Christian faith, and destruction of the laws and estate of holy Church, to the great peril of the souls of the people, and of all the realm of England, as more plainly is found, and sufficiently proved, before the reverend father in God, the Archbishop of Canterbury, and the bishops and other prelates, masters of divinity, and doctors of canon and of civil law, and a great part of the clergy of the said realm: which preachers being cited or summoned before the ordinaries of the places, there to answer to that whereof they be impeached, they will not obey to their summons and commandments, nor care for their monitions, nor for the censures of holy Church, but expressly despise them; and, moreover, by their subtle and ingenious words, do draw the people to hear their sermons, and do maintain them in their errors by strength of hand by great routs. It is, therefore, ordained and assented to in this present Parliament, that the king's commissions be made and directed to the sheriffs and other ministers of our sovereign lord the king, or other sufficient persons learned and according

to the certifications of the prelates thereof, to be made in the Chancery from time to time, to arrest all such preachers, and also their factors, maintainers, and abettors, and to hold them in arrest and strong prison till they shall justify themselves according to the law and reason of the holy Church. And the King willeth and commandeth that the Chancellor make such commission at all times that he, by the prelates, or any of them, shall be certified and thereof required as is aforesaid." *

This priest-made law never received the sanction of Parliament, but it served the purpose of its framers as an instrument of ecclesiastical tyranny.

The energies of Wycliffe were now concentrated for the accomplishment of his greatest work—the complete translation of the Bible. He had just views of the importance and value of this service, and a corresponding sense of his own responsibility.

"The Scripture," he said, "is the faith of the Church, and the more it is known in an orthodox sense the better. Therefore, as secular men ought to know the faith, so it is to be taught them in whatsoever language is best known to them. Besides, since the truth of the faith is clearer and more exact in the Scripture than the priests know how to express it: seeing, if one may say so, that there are many prelates who are too ignorant of the Scripture, and others conceal points of Scripture—such, to wit, as declare the poverty and humility of the clergy, and there are many such defects in the verbal instructions of the priests, it seems useful that *the faithful should themselves search out or discover the sense of the faith, by having the Scripture in a language which they know and understand.* Besides, according to the faith taught by the apostles (Heb. xi.), the saints by faith overcame kingdoms, and by the motive of faith chiefly hastened to their own country. Why, therefore, ought not the fountain of faith to be made known to the people by those means by which a man may know it the most clearly? Christ and his apostles converted the most part of the world by making known the

* Foxe's Acts and Mon., i. 575, 576.

Scripture in a language which was most familiar to the people. For to this purpose did the Holy Spirit give them the knowledge of all tongues. Why, therefore, ought not the disciples of Christ in our own time to collect fragments from the same loaf, and, after such example, open the Scriptures clearly and plainly to the people, that they may know them? Besides, since, according to the faith which the apostle teaches, all Christians must stand before the judgment-seat of Christ, and be answerable to Him for all the goods which He has entrusted them, it is necessary that the faithful should know what these goods are, and the uses of them: for an answer by a prelate or attorney will not then avail, but every one must answer in his own person."*

Wycliffe felt that necessity was laid upon him to finish this work. He had long occupied himself with postils and translations of detached portions of the sacred volume. And in all his conflicts, his attention was drawn more closely to the study of the sacred text. His interest in the Word of Life grew continually, but though he had the help of a few earnest coadjutors, the task was one of no ordinary magnitude. He suffered continual interruption, and he was watched day and night by his implacable foes. Happily they were not suffered to drive him from his books at the university, until the great work was substantially done. He completed his translation of the Bible in 1381.

To crush him outright, his opponents succeeded in bringing him before the grand council held at Oxford, in 1382, on a charge of heresy for denying the doctrine of transubstantiation.

Council at
Oxford,
1382.

Though he made a defence of singular acuteness, he was condemned and expelled from the university, in which he had resided for forty years.

* Speculum Secularium Dominiorum, MS. Apud. Elc. Usser, Lewis c. v. 86, 87.

Deprived of his professorship, and placed under the papal ban, we see him setting out at day-break for Lutterworth, a small town in the centre of England. The countenance of the venerable pilgrim is pale with continuous study, and blanched with recent sickness. Traces of care and of severe mental conflict are also visible on his manly brow. Yet his eye sparkles with the mingled fire of intelligence, charity, and zeal. Staff in hand, with a flowing beard, and habited in a simple robe, he moves along with the step of one who has a grand and worthy object before him, which he is resolved at all hazards to accomplish. His translation still needs careful revision, and his aim is to roll the stone from the Well of Life, and to render it accessible to all.

The Pope was not willing that Wycliffe should remain in quiet amongst his rustic flock. Mortified and incensed by the apparent inaction of the Anglican prelates, he sent a special messenger to summon him to appear at Rome.

The schism of the rival Popes had suspended for a time the ordinary work of the Pontiff. He now determined to act with vigour, in order to extirpate the imputed heresy which, to his consternation, had taken deep root in England.

Wycliffe received the papal missive with perfect composure. To undertake the journey to Rome, in his state of health, was physically impossible. In a characteristic letter, he declined to obey the summons.

One thing cheered the veteran reformer—he knew that his labour was not in vain. Portions of

the sacred writings, as soon as they could be transcribed, were received by the "common people" with the greatest eagerness. Copyists found constant and remunerative occupation in meeting the demand.

The closing days of Wycliffe seem to have been spent in completing a summary or body of divinity in four books: the fourth book is divided into four parts; the first two contain an exposition of the Sermon on the Mount; the third treats of Antichrist, from our Lord's discourse, in Matthew xxiii. and xxv.; and the fourth is on his discourse to the disciples at the last supper, John xiii.—xvii. This part is unfinished, and ends abruptly in the fourteenth chapter. On the last day in the year 1384, and at the age of sixty, Wycliffe ended in peace his noble career.

CHAPTER VI.

THE writings of Wycliffe attracted attention in the university of Prague. The Queen of England was a Bohemian princess, and sister to King Wenceslaus. She was in the habit of reading the New Testament, and carried with her to the court of Richard (in 1381) a book of the gospels in the Latin, German, and Bohemian tongues. "Although," says Arundel, "she was a stranger, yet she constantly studied the four gospels in English; and in the study of these, and reading of godly books, she was more diligent than the prelates, though their office and business require this of them." 1381.

Intercourse was kept up between England and Bohemia for a considerable period with advantage to both countries. In the first instance, the works of the English reformer were read only by a few in Bohemia, but on the return of Jerome, of Prague, from Oxford, where he had been a student, greater interest was excited, and a conflict arose that awakened the attention of Europe. JOHN HUSS* became

* Krümmel: Gillett; *Historia et Monumenta Jo. Hus. atque Hieronymi Pragensis*; Jo. Cochläi *Hist. Hussitarum*, lib. xii.; Giesler, *Third Period*, chap. v. sec. 149; Neander; *Bonnechose*.

the centre and spring of this agitation. He studied the works of Wycliffe from the year 1391. "I am drawn to him," he says, "by the reputation he enjoys with the good, not with the bad priests of the university of Oxford and generally with the people; though not with the bad, covetous, pomp-loving, dissipated prelates and priests. I am attracted by his writings, in which *he expends every effort to conduct all men back to the law of Christ*, and especially the clergy, inviting them to let go the pomp and dominion of the world, and live with the apostles according to the life of Christ. I am attracted by the law of Christ, maintaining its truth and holding that not one jot or tittle of it could fail."*

Though Huss found so much in the sentiments of Wycliffe in accordance with his own views, there were many points of dissimilarity between them. They were men of very different temperament. Huss, in person, was tall, thin and of pale complexion; Wycliffe, even when wasted by sickness, had a more commanding appearance. Wycliffe reduced his knowledge as far as possible to principles somewhat sharply defined, and held by them firmly; Huss shrank from these settled conclusions from a constant dread of heresy. Wycliffe grasped the truth eagerly, and pursued his inquiries to their issues with ardour and resolution that nothing could repress; Huss, though a man of active zeal, felt his way slowly through the labyrinth of philosophy and scholastic theology.

* Opp., fol. 109.

There was a corresponding difference in their personal career. Though occupying a leading position in the university of Prague, it was apparently the chief desire of Huss to be useful as a preacher.

In the year 1391, John, of Milhem, a member of the royal council of Bohemia, in conjunction with a merchant of the city, named Creutz, founded a chapel, to be devoted particularly to *the preaching of the gospel in the vulgar tongue, for the benefit of the people.* The object of the foundation is stated in the original title-deed in the following terms—

Bethlehem
Chapel,
1391.

“The merciful God who, in the seed of the Word, has left behind Him a provision for them that fear Him, so ordered it by the institutions of the fathers, that *the preaching of the Word of God should not be bound*, it being the freest, as it is the most profitable act for the Church and her members.” “Had He not bequeathed to us the seed of God’s Word, and of holy preaching, we should have been like unto Sodom and Gomorrah. Christ, moreover, gave commission to his disciples when He appeared to them after his resurrection, to preach the Word, so as to preserve constantly in the world the living memory of Himself. But since all his actions are doctrines to them that truly believe on Him, the founders of this institution seriously considered that the city of Prague, though possessing many places consecrated to the worship of God, and used for a variety of purposes connected with that worship, was still destitute of a place devoted especially to preaching. Preachers, particularly in the Bohemian tongue, were under the disagreeable necessity of strolling about for this purpose, to houses and corners; therefore the founders endowed a chapel consecrated to the Innocents, and named Bethlehem, or the House of Bread, for the use of the common people, that they might be refreshed with the bread of holy preaching.”

Huss was appointed preacher in the Bohemian

tongue, and gathered around him a Christian community warmly attached to his ministry. Huss appointed preacher. Queen Sophia, with a large concourse of noblemen, knights, and persons of all ranks and conditions, attended the chapel.

The promoters of this movement proceeded, as they thought, with great caution, justifying themselves by pointing to the example of Christ. At the court of Rome a plea of this kind was treated as perfectly irrelevant. They had not consulted the papal authorities, and practically, they were *Separatists*. Huss was brought into collision with the papal dignitaries by the part he was constrained to take in the proceedings of the university of Prague, respecting forty-five theses of Wycliffe. On the 28th of May, 1403, the Wycliffe's writings condemned, 1403. faculty condemned them as heretical. Huss, though not prepared to defend them without qualification, could not join in the sentence of absolute prohibition. In his sermons at the chapel of Bethlehem, he spoke freely on passing events. He sought a practical reformation, and inveighed against the vices of the clergy, and the withholding of the Bible from the people.

They were, in consequence, deeply offended. The Abbot of Dola, in 1408, wrote a work to Abbot of Dola, 1408. counteract the influence of Huss. He complained that the doctrines of Wycliffe were secretly and openly disseminated in Bohemia, and that his writings were scattered over the whole world. It is the boast of the followers of Wycliffe, he tells us, that they were the first to make familiar the understanding of the Scriptures, and to diffuse

the gospel everywhere. "*We preach*," they say, "*we proclaim the word of God—we guide the people.*"*

Complaint was made by the priests of Prague to the archbishop, in 1408, against their public reprovcr, and on March 9th, 1410, a bull from Alexander V. was published, for-
Complaints
against
Huss, 1408.
 bidding, under pain of excommunication, the spread of Wycliffe's works, and all preaching in private chapels. Great dissatisfaction was caused among the people, and at court; but the papal decree was enforced, and on July 16th, more than two hundred volumes of Wycliffe's works were publicly burned, amidst the ringing of bells and the solemn chanting of the *Te Deum*.

Two days after, Huss and his friends were excommunicated. Wenceslaus, for a time, befriended the reformer. "It is our will," said the king, "that Bethlehem Chapel which, for
Excommu-
nicated.
 the glory of God, and the saving good of the people, we have endowed with franchises for the preaching of the gospel, should stand, and be confirmed in its privileges, so that its patrons may not be deprived of their rights of patronage, and that Master Huss (loyal, devout, and beloved) may be established over this chapel, and preach the Word of God in peace."†

The feeling excited on the occasion in the mind of Huss, we learn from one of his sermons.

"The life of God's servants," he said, "has become bitter to them. In many lands—as Bohemia, Misnia,
Feeling
excited.
 England, and elsewhere—they suffer great persecutions. The faithful priests are put to death, tortured,

* Stephanus Dolanus Antiwicleffus. By Pez Thesaur, tom. vi. par. 2, pp. 184—218; Neander, ix. 341.

† Palacky III., i. p. 258.

cursed; nor is it advisable on any account to appeal to Rome, where Antichrist's wickedness, baseness, and pride have culminated, so that simony and avarice have poured forth in a rushing tide from Bohemia. Bishoprics are bought and sold at a higher price than many a lordly estate. The common people are confounded. Some are afraid to confess the truth against error; some, through discord among priests, do not know what to hold. Others still experience great concern that many go thus astray, are slandered as heretics, and put to death, through the great persecution of divine truth. The waves of the sea—that is, the men of the world—rage; for the world is compared to the sea, and they bruit abroad that they who confess Christ and defend his truth are errorists and heretics.

“If any Christian spirit is to be found to oppose their baseness, they are filled with hate and bitterness, and by their wicked device forbid by interdict the public worship of God, where they cannot suppress the preaching which reveals to the people their scandalous perversity.

“Of this kind of wickedness have I written in my books, both in Bohemian and Latin, and to me the wickedness seems the most vexations and intolerable to the true Christians. But neither wrong nor pain and death can deter the true preacher, with real love to God, from the preaching of the truth; and the false prohibition of public worship is a grievous stone of stumbling, not so much to the preacher, who is glad to preach, as to the people, who would gladly hear the Word of God.”*

In the midst of this excitement, Huss is said to have received an interesting communication from the followers of Wycliffe in England. He Letter from England. took it with him into the pulpit, and said to his hearers: “See, our dearly-beloved Richard has written a letter full of cheer and encouragement.”†

After the expression of general Christian sentiments the writer says:—

“Do thou, therefore, O Huss! a brother greatly beloved in

* *New Englander*, Oct., 1864, p. 621.

† *Holfert*, 116. *Gillett*.

Christ—unknown to me, indeed, in person, but not in faith and love—for what part of the world can tear asunder and separate those whom the love of Christ unites?) be comforted and strengthened in the grace which is given thee. As a good soldier of Jesus Christ war in word and in deed, and recal into the way of truth as many as thou art able; because neither by erroneous and deceitful decrees, nor by the false opinions and doctrines of Antichrist, is the truth of the gospel to be kept in silence and in secret. Rather comfort and strengthen the members of Christ by weakening the wiles and deceit of Satan; because Antichrist shall come to an end in a short time: it is the will of the Lord! It is a great joy to me that, not only in your kingdom, but elsewhere, God hath so strengthened the hearts of some, that they suffer with pleasure imprisonments, banishments, and even death itself, for the Word of God. I have nothing more to write, beloved brethren, only that I willingly confess I would strengthen you, and all the lovers of Christ's laws, in the love of the law of God. Therefore I salute them from the bowels of my heart—particularly your companion—intreating that you would pray for me and the whole Church. And the God of peace, who raised from the dead that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, our Lord Jesus Christ, fit you for every good work, that ye may do what is acceptable to Him, through Jesus Christ our Lord; to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen."*

Huss replied to the letter in appropriate and cordial terms in the name of the Church.†

Shortly after the burning of Wycliffe's books, the news arrived in Prague of the accession of John XXIII. to the pontificate. The character of the new Pope was notoriously vile; pirate and adulterer, and withal addicted to the foulest vices, he was scorned universally, and would not have been tolerated at all but for the supposed sanctity of his office. Huss was not prepared

Character
of John
XXIII.

* Jones, Eccles. Hist., iii. 65; attributed in error to Wickliffe. Bon-nechæ 61—64.

† Helfert, 131.

to disown his Holiness on this account. Monster of iniquity as he was, according to the Romish theory he was still entitled to reverence as the "Vicar of Christ." "We concede," said Huss, "that a bad Pope, bishop, or priest, is an unworthy minister of those sacraments by which God baptizes and consecrates, or in other ways operates for the advancement of his Church. But, in the same way, He ordains much that is good through the instrumentality of the devil as his minister, being very mighty, glorious, and praiseworthy in this, that he effects such singular ends by so reprobate a minister. But the minister effects it to his own condemnation."

Huss appealed to John XXIII. as if he had incarnated all the excellences of the inspired apostles.

He pointed out to his Holiness the unreasonableness of burning books which contained no theological matter whatever, but

which related to worldly sciences, quite contrary to the example of holy men of old, as, for example, Moses and Daniel, who appropriated to themselves the knowledge of unbelieving nations. With respect to the preaching in the chapel at Bethlehem, he contends that he has only followed the example of Christ, "who preached everywhere, in the streets, in the fields, and on the lake, and after his resurrection transferred the office of preaching to his disciples for ever."*

To be consistent with himself Huss should have been content with the command of the risen Re-

* Appellatio Joann Hus, ab. archiepiscopo ad sedem apostolicam ; Opp. i. fol. 89.

deemer, without seeking the endowment of a licentious Pope. He struggled on for a long time in the vain attempt to combine light with darkness. "As Christ," we are told, "was the great centre of his faith and life, so he had determined to adhere only to his Word as the rule of faith and life. But with this he could still join a firm adherence to the existing doctrines of the Church, being not as yet conscious of any contradiction between them and the sacred Scriptures, because his whole theological development had sprung out of the practical element. As he had not the remotest idea of deserting the actual Church and forming a new one, so he could still seek to unite the two things together; though he was already firmly resolved to sacrifice everything to the truth as clearly gathered from the Scriptures, and to reject all that stood in conflict with it, or which he clearly made out to be such, he still clung to church tradition; but it appeared to him only as the historical evolution of the truth contained, as to its essence, in the sacred Scriptures—an evolution of the germs therein contained, as he expresses it in his tract "*De decimis*," where he says: "Law, as determined by the prelates, is styled canon law, and its purpose is to restrain, within due limits, whatever stands in conflict with the holy laws of the Church. It may be compared with the evangelical law, the latter being the articles of faith which have been determined by the holy synods. As the man remains the same, though he may appear in a different dress, and under different, changeable, and accidental characters, so it is in the

Mental peculiarities
of Huss.

same law, or the same evangelical truth, which is contained implicitly, or unfolded, in the gospel, and is afterwards expounded by the Church in another but not contradictory manner."

Huss held by the Scriptures, but persuaded himself that the vain traditions of Rome had, by some kind of spiritual alchemy, sprung from them; even when directly opposed to the letter and spirit of the divine, and therefore perfect directory.

The process was rough and trying that modified this strange and inconsistent conclusion.

John XXIII. cited Huss to appear before the
Cited by the Pope. papal court at Bologna. Huss excused himself, and explained his reasons in his work, entitled, "*De Ecclesia*."

"What reason had I for obedience," he says, "a man summoned from a distance of twelve hundred miles, what reason that I, a man unknown to the Pope, informed against by my enemies, should be so very solicitous, and put myself to such extraordinary pains to pass through the midst of my enemies, that I should use up the property of the poor to defray the enormous expenses, or if I could not meet the expenses, miserably perish from hunger and thirst? And what was to be gained by my appearance? One consequence, certainly, would be neglect of the work which God gave me to do, for my own salvation and that of others. Then I should be learning, not how to believe, but how to conduct a process, a thing not permitted to a servant of God. Then I should be robbed by the consistory of Cardinals—made lukewarm in holy living; be betrayed into impatience by oppression; and if I had nothing to give, must be condemned, let my cause be ever so good; and what is still worse, I should be compelled to worship on my bended knees."*

The Abbot of Dola, who rather desired to see

* Neander, ix. 408, 409.

Huss within the grasp of Rome, reproached him with cowardice, and reminded him of the words of Christ, "Fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul." "Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth?" Cited to the court thou oughtest rather to appear, and with the apostle to say, "If God be for us, who can be against us. Behold God spared not his own Son but gave Himself for us, even to be judged by the impious judge Pilate. Art thou greater than Christ? Christ did not refuse to be judged by an iniquitous judge, and wilt thou despise the judgment of the Supreme Pontiff, the Vicar of Jesus Christ, who will only condemn thee to purge thee from thy sins?" Huss did not yield to this reasoning. "True," he replied, "but it is also written that we should be wise as serpents and harmless as doves." He concluded that it would be better for him, and wiser under the circumstances, to stay at home.

Reproached
by the
Abbot of
Dola.

The king (Wenceslaus) interposed his kind offices and dissuaded the Pope from proceeding to extremities. An embassy was sent to conciliate the court of Rome. In February, 1411, sentence of excommunication was pronounced in contumacy against Huss, for not obeying the citation. Proceedings in the case were suspended; the archbishop reported to the Pope that Prague was free from heresy, and that Huss, by his confession had vindicated himself from imputations of error made against him. This hollow truce might have continued unbroken for some time,

Befriended
by Wences-
laus.

but for the rashness of the people who had attended the ministrations of Bethlehem Chapel.

A legate of Pope John XXIII. published a bull granting full indulgence to all who would take part in a crusade against King Ladislaus, of Naples, for supporting the pretensions of the rival Pope, Gregory XII. Paletz, in the name of the theological faculty, offered a resolution to the following effect, in reference to the Pope's indulgence :—

“We do not take it upon us to raise objections against the Lord apostolical or his letters, to pass any judgment whatever upon them, or to determine anything with regard to them, as we have no authority for it.”

Huss could not, in conscience, acquiesce in this neutral course. The indulgence was nothing less than a premium on pillage and murder.

Resisted by Huss. He understood well that it was on the part of the Pope a scheme of iniquitous extortion and violence. He felt constrained, therefore, to publish a long argument against the imposition, appealing, as usual, to Scripture, and at the same time modifying his statements as far as possible, to keep free from the suspicion of heresy. His friend Jerome, with less caution, poured forth a torrent of eloquent invective against the papal abuses, and kindled the utmost enthusiasm in the students who listened to his oration. He was borne in triumph to his home. The excitement increased and spread throughout the city.

A mock procession was speedily improvised, and the papal bulls were suspended on the necks of cer-

tain loose women, who mounted a chariot surrounded by armed men, shouting on their way, "To the stake with the letters of a heretic and a rogue." Near the pillory the papal documents were thrown on a heap and burned. ^{Public excitement.}

The king now interfered, and decreed every further act of contempt against the Pope, and resistance to the bull, punishable with death. Notwithstanding this royal prohibition, Huss continued to preach against the indulgence, and his hearers were the more inflamed. A tragic incident soon after occurred. A number of priests, distributed among the several churches, were occupied on the 10th of July, in inviting the people to purchase indulgences. Three young artisans, John, Martin, and Stasek, stepping forward, cried to one of the preachers, "Master Huss has taught us better than that—we know it is all false." They were seized shortly after and taken to the council house. On the next day, in pursuance with the royal decree, they were condemned to death. Huss hastened to attempt their deliverance. Accompanied by two thousand students he repaired to the council house to intercede on their behalf with the senate. He was promised that the lives of the young men should be spared. When the multitude, however, had retired, the prisoners were conducted under a large escort of soldiers, and hurried to execution. The people rushed together in tumult to witness the scene. The headsman, after his work was done, cried aloud, "Let him who does the like expect to suffer the same fate." The crowd instantly exclaimed as with

Imprisonment and martyrdom of three young men.

one voice, "We are all ready to do the like and to suffer the same." Several persons dipped their handkerchiefs in the blood of the victims, and treasured them up as precious relics. A Christian woman wrapped the bodies in a shroud of white linen, and a body of students, under the direction of Master von Jitzin, conveyed them to Bethlehem Chapel, mingling songs with their exclamations of grief.

The die was cast. It was impossible for the conflicting parties any longer to pretend neutrality. Agitation was of necessity renewed, and, as on former occasions, the writings of Wycliffe were again discussed with vehemence on both sides.

Huss declined to join with the doctors of the university in their second act of condemnation. He was represented, in consequence, as a dangerous man, and the Pope again issued the sentence of excommunication to this effect: "If Huss should continue refractory for twenty days, the ban should be published in all the churches of Prague on Sundays and festival days, amidst the tolling of the bells and the extinguishment of the altar lights; whoever had intercourse with him should come under the same ban; every place of his abode should be put under interdict."

Huss caused a protest against this sentence to be affixed to the walls of the chapel at Bethlehem, and appealed from the corrupt Roman tribunal to "the only incorrupt, righteous, and infallible Judge — Jesus Christ."*
Appeals to Christ, the fallible

*er. Huss, tom. i. fol. 176; Lenfant, i. 34, 35.

encounters proved wearisome, and the city suffered greatly from the effects of the interdict. At the request of the king, Huss withdrew from Prague. In his absence, a synod was held ^{1413.} on the 6th of February, 1413, for the consideration of his case, when Paletz, his fiercest accuser, was censured for hindering a compromise.

In the meantime Huss, as a fugitive, was sheltered at the castle Kozi-prádek, which belonged to the lords of Austie. Freed from the distractions of the city, and left to calm ^{Sheltered as a fugitive.} and more profound reflection, he wrote a treatise, entitled "*De Ecclesia*," in which some rays of light glanced through the mist in which he had ^{De Eccle-} so long been shrouded. "We must regard ^{sia."} the clerical body," he says, "as made up of two sects: the clergy of Christ and those of Antichrist. The Christian clergy lean on Christ as their leader, and on his laws; the clergy of Antichrist lean for the most part wholly on human laws, and the laws of Antichrist, and yet pretend to be the clergy of Christ and of the Church, so as to seduce the people by a more cunning hypocrisy. And two sects, which are so directly opposed, must necessarily be governed by two opposite heads, with their corresponding laws."* In explanation of the passage, "Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my Church," he contends that the Rock referred to is the Lord Himself. He is not prepared to assert that the Pope and cardinals are essential to the Church; it is possible, in his opinion, "*that God may bring back his Church to the original state when presbyters*

* *De Ecclesia*, Opp. i., fol. 226, 1.

and bishops were the same." "In the early Church," he says, "there were but two grades of office—deacon and presbyter (or bishop). Two orders only in the Church.

All beside are of later date, and of human invention."* Still his views on Church polity are by no means clear. If he advances a step or two in the direction of the scriptural system, he shrinks back in doubt and fear.

Besides the treatise in Latin for the use of the learned, Huss prepared a series of sermons in the Bohemian tongue for the instruction of the Sermons of Huss. people. As if in anticipation of the fate that awaited him, he employed this interval of retirement to give the most distinct utterance of his views, to strengthen the faith of his followers, and as a record that should remain to inspire their confidence and excite their zeal in the event of his martyrdom. He took a deep interest in the preservation of the native language, and wrote books on orthography and grammar with a view to the preservation of its purity. The correction and distribution of the Bohemian Bible is said to have been his constant care. To a certain extent he provided the people, therefore, with religious literature doubly interesting to them as the product of his own industry, and from its special adaptation to their condition in the conflict through which they were passing. These sermons give us the best view of the character and spirit of the Bohemian reformer. The frankness of his declarations of the truth, so far as he knew it, and his fearless rebukes, unmingled with bitterness and personal malice, place him

* Gillett, i. p. 248.

in a light that explains to us the secret of his commanding influence. We are made to understand as clearly the cause of the hostility of the priests.

In a sermon on repentance, he maintains that sorrow and anguish for the wickedness that has been done should be followed by satisfaction—that is, the patient endurance of all kinds of self-denial, such as fasting, prayer, watching, and the various works of mercy which in the Holy Scriptures are called fruits of repentance.

“But after this sort,” he continues, “assuredly do not the deceivers of the world and the false priests preach. But they preach just this—Whoever gives gold receives the forgiveness of his sins, and release from the eternal penalty of sin. Possibly some one might say in confession to the priest, ‘My dear priest, see, I give you this gold; give me, I pray you, therefore, just the assured certainty that I do not bestow it in vain.’ Then the priest would answer him, ‘You have the Pope’s letter already. What would you have more?’ But the man replies, ‘I would like fuller assurance—a letter of Christ, or at least an autograph of St. Peter or Paul, who also filled this office, and never issued such letters of indulgence.’ Thus pushed, the priest would certainly fall into great confusion, since he cannot say even of himself whether he shall reach heaven or hell. And the Pope knows just as little as the peasant whether he will be saved or not.

“Such prophets (referred to by Peter in his Second Epistle ii. 1) have certainly blasphemed the way of truth, as fools do also, and if one contrasts their false doctrines with the Scripture, then he is a heretic. They do not see that the holy Apostle Peter names them *teachers*, which means the same with *doctors*, as they are generally called, inasmuch as they are instructed in papal laws and constitutions, or in cunningly-devised words, and thereby they deceive the people. Therefore St. Peter says, ‘And through avarice, by feigned words, shall they make gain of you?’ And it is a cunningly-feigned story, that whoever gives gold, though he be the greatest wretch, receives forgiveness of sin and release from the pains of hell, if he but confesses and

testifies sorrow. And is it not a scandalous matter, invented by avarice, that whoever seeks pardon and exemption from the pains of hell has only to give as much gold for it as he would need to expend on a journey to and from Rome? Yea, is it not a scandalous thing when we are still told that the Pope exercises great compassion in sparing the labour and trouble of a long journey to Rome, and grants them a great favour in their own dwellings, when he, in virtue of his plenary authority, can do what he will, and when it depends solely on his will whether any one shall receive forgiveness of sins, and therewith admission to heaven, or shall be eternally tormented in hell? Yet with such impious words do the avaricious teachers of Antichrist practise upon Christ's people. And they are guilty of leading them astray from the way of truth, and setting their hopes on their gold and the indulgences by which they are deceived as to the eternal salvation of their souls."

To counteract the superstitious terror of the people inspired by the usurped power of the priesthood to forgive sins, Huss says:—

"Man can receive forgiveness of sins only through the power of God and the merit of Christ. Then, let any one—Pope, bishop, or any priest soever—call out, 'O man! I forgive thee thy sins: I free thee from thy sins and the pains of hell!' It is mere breath, and to no purpose, and of no avail, unless God forgives the man who truly repents of all his sins. But the true Christian does not suffer himself at any time to be led astray. His hope rests on God, who pardons his sins. He knows, moreover, that no priest can retain his sins any longer if God releases him from them. And so, also, I would not allow myself to be frightened, though all the priests were to cry out together that they do not forgive my sins. I am loosed from them, if God looses me; and their cry is a base lie. Nor will I suffer myself to be lulled to sleep by them when they say to me, 'We forgive your sins, and release you from the pains of hell,' for I know what God says—that if you do not sincerely repent of your sins, then are they retained."

The immoralities of the priests he never ceased to expose and to denounce in the most scathing

terms. Whilst, as a faithful watchman, Huss warned the people against impending dangers, it is evident, from the prevailing tone of his writings, that he was himself preparing for martyrdom. The time of his voluntary seclusion was a crisis in his personal religious experience. The battles of the heart and of principle are fought in solitude. There is a minor Gethsemane, into which every true servant of Christ must enter in order to become an example and a witness to his age. The correspondence of Huss at this period reveals in a most interesting manner the conflict within. In a letter to Master Christann of Prachatic, rector of Prague university, he says :—

Crisis in the
experience
of Huss.

Mental
conflict of
Huss.

“As to the advice of the faculty, with Christ’s help, I would not receive it, if I stood before a stake, which was ready prepared for my execution. If I cannot make the truth free in all, I will at least not be an enemy to the truth, and will resist to the death all agreement with falsehood. Let the world flow on as the Lord permits it to flow ! A good death is better than a bad life. One ought never to sin through fear of death. To end this life, by God’s grace, is to pass out of misery. *The more knowledge of truth one gains, the harder he has to work.* He who speaks the truth, breaks his own neck. He who fears death, loses the joy of living. Truth triumphs over all ; he triumphs who dies for the truth ; for no calamity can touch him, if no sin has dominion over him ! Blessed are ye when men curse you, says the Truth. This is the foundation on which I build, this is the food for my spirit, recruiting it with fresh vigour to contend against all adversaries of the truth.”*

In reply to a consolatory letter from the rector of Prague university, Huss writes :—

“Very thankfully do I accept this consolation, while I fasten

* Palacky III. i., p. 297, 298.

on those passages of Scripture (such as 2 Tim. iii. 12) ; and rely on this, that if I am a righteous man, nothing can trouble me or induce me to swerve from the truth, and if I live and will live devoutly in Christ, then in the name of Christ must I suffer persecutions ; for if it became Christ to suffer and so to enter into his glory, it surely becomes us poor creatures, to take up the cross and to follow Him in his sufferings. And I assure you that persecution would never trouble me, if my sins and the corruption of Christian people did not trouble me. For what harm could it do me to lose the riches of this world, which are but dross ? What harm to lose the favour of the world, which might lead me astray from the way of Christ ? What harm to suffer reproach, which, if borne with patience, purifies and transfigures the children of God, so that they shine like the sun in the kingdom of their father ? And finally, what harm to have my poor life taken from me, which is death, if he who loses this, says, ‘ But I have thought also of the words of our Lord (Matt. x. 23), But when they persecute you in one city, flee ye into another.’ Behold the precept or promise of Christ ; I know not which of these opposite things I ought to do. Give me then your opinion. My conscience troubles me. I know not but my absence may give scandal, though the sheep do not want for needful nourishment from the divine word. On the other hand, I encounter the fear lest my presence should, through that execrable device of an interdict, be laid hold of as a pretext for depriving them of their nourishment, namely the communion, and other things ministrant to salvation. Therefore, let us humbly beg that the Almighty God would teach us what I, a poor creature, ought to do in this present case, as not to swerve from the path of uprightness.”*

At the close of 1413, he wrote in the spirit of affectionate solicitude to his people :—

“ So far as you are able, hear diligently and devoutly the Word of God. Care not for those enemies who
 Concern for his flock, would keep you from hearing the sermons in
 1413. Bethlehem.” “ If they say, I have run away
 and left you, be assured that I did it voluntarily, to

* Opp. 1, fol. 93, 94.

fulfil the Word of Christ, and in imitation of his example, who say, whosoever shall not receive you, nor hear your words, when ye depart out of that house or city, shake off the dust of your feet' (Matt. x. 14, 23). And he adverts to the fact that Christ often, when the Jews would have killed Him, escaped from their hands (John x. 39, xi. 54). I have not yielded with any intention that divine truth should be denied through me, for which truth I hope, with God's help, to die. In the next place, you know that it became Christ, as He Himself says, to suffer until the time appointed by the Father. Of this, then, be well assured, that whatever God has determined to do with me, will be done. And if I am worthy to die for his name, He will call me to suffering; but if it be his pleasure to draw me forth once more to the preaching of his Word, this depends upon his will." In other words he repeats the expression of his desire to see them, and of his deep and tender concern for their welfare. 'You,' he says, 'who love God's Word and strive to become with it, would be glad to see me.' I too should be glad once more to see you, that I might preach to you God's Word; for this must ever be the great and especial concern of the ministers of the Church to preach to the people the gospel of Christ in its purity and with fruit."

In another letter he writes :—

"Dearest Brethren and Beloved Sisters,—I have written to the end that you might stand fast in the truth you have known, fear no citations, and attend not a whit less than you ever did, on account of their cruel threats, to the preaching of God's Word. For God is faithful, who will establish you and preserve you from evil." "Pray for those who preach God's truth with grace, and pray also for me, that I may more richly write and preach against Antichrist, and that God may lead me in the battle, when I am driven to the greatest strait, that so I may be able to maintain his own truth. For know that I shrink not from giving up this poor body for God's truth, when I feel assured there is no want of the preaching of God's Word, but that daily the truth of the gospel is more widely spread. But I desire to live for their sakes to whom violence is done, and who need the preaching of God's Word, that this way the malice of Antichrist may be discovered as a

Martyr
spirit.

warning to the pious. I preach, therefore, in other places, ministering to whoever may be found there; since I know that God's will is fulfilled in me, whether it be by a death hung over me by Antichrist, or whether I die in sickness. And if I come to Prague, I am certain that my enemies will lie in wait for me and persecute you, they who do not serve God themselves will hinder others from serving Him. But let us pray to God for them."*

Huss came as near to Prague as he might do with safety. Henry of Lazan offered him, as a place of refuge, his castle, the stronghold of Cracowec. From thence he made secret visits to his people, and continued to preach whenever he could find an opportunity. "In all places," he says, "where a need exists, in cities, in villages, in castles, in the fields, in forests, wherever I can be of any use, pray for me that the Word of God may not be kept back in me." Crowds followed him and listened with rapt attention to his ministry. He was in no mood of despondency. Under all circumstances, he anticipated a glorious triumph ultimately for the truth.

"The truth," he says, "always conquers, since this is its habit and nature, that the more it is obscured the more it shines out, and the more it is beat down the higher it rises. Priests, Scribes and Pharisees, Herod, Pilate, and the other dwellers in Jerusalem, condemned truth, and gave it over to death and the grave; but it arose again, all conquering, and substituted in place of itself twelve other heralds. And this same truth has sent to Prague, instead of our feeble goose (Huss), many falcons and eagles, which excel in sharpness of vision all other birds. These, by the grace of God, soar upward, high upward, and swoop away other birds to Jesus Christ, who will strengthen them, and confirm all his faithful

* Ep. ad Mag. Martinum et Mag. Nicol. Miliczen; Neander, ix. 424, seq.; Opp. i. fol. 93, and fol. 94, 1.

ones. For He declares, 'I am with you alway, unto the end of the world.' If *He* then be with us, the true God and mightiest, best defender, who, in his malice, shall be against us? What fear, or what death shall separate us from Him? What do we lose when, *for his sake*, we lose earthly goods, friends, honours, and this wretched life? Surely we shall then first be delivered from this wretchedness, and obtain a hundredfold greater possessions, dearer friends, and a more perfect joy. Death shall not deprive us of these things; for he who dies for Christ conquers, and will be delivered from all sorrows, and attain to that eternal joy, to which, may our Saviour, Jesus Christ, bring us all."*

As Huss was balancing in his own mind the claims of his flock to his personal attention, with the dangers in which his presence might involve them, his course became decided, indirectly, to a large degree, by the sleepless efforts of Gerson, to silence his ministry and to bring him to the stake.

Writing to the Archbishop of Prague, in 1413, Gerson says: "By miracles in the times of the apostles; by argumentative disputations of learned men afterwards; and when these failed by general councils held under the favour of the emperor; last of all, when the evil became desperate, the arm of the secular power was invoked to cut off heresies with those that favoured them, and cast them into the fire, thus guarding against their word eating like a canker to their own destruction." He suggests to the archbishop that his path of duty is plain. "If false teachers, sowing heresy, demand miracles, let them know that their object has been attained, and that they are past and gone. Our faith is not now a novel thing to be confirmed by them. These

Efforts of
Gerson to
silence
Huss, 1413.

* Opp. fol. 96, 2; and fol. 97, 1.

men have not only Moses and the prophets, but the apostles and ancient doctors, as well as the holy councils; they have also modern doctors gathered in the universities, especially in the university of Paris, which has been free of heresy hitherto, and with God's protection, shall be for ever. Having all these things, let them believe them; otherwise, they would not believe, though one rose from the dead. There will be no end to disputing with such men, who contend with persevering animosity, and lean on their own conceit. Moreover, by too much altercation, truth suffers. The common people are scandalised, and charity is violated. Such perversity of obstinate men comes to this, of the poet *Crescit Medendo*. If then, none of the previously mentioned remedies avails, it only remains that the axe of the secular arm be laid at the root of the barren and cursed tree. That arm you are to invoke by all methods; and you are required to do it by a regard for the salvation of those committed to your care."*

Huss returned from his retreat to Prague, and on August 16th, 1414, posted placards in the city, offering himself to be examined by the synod, and to suffer punishment, if proved guilty of heresy. But he did not obtain a hearing. At the invitation of the Emperor Sigismund, who offered him a safe-conduct, he went from Prague to appear before the Council of Constance. On the eve of his departure, he wrote a letter to his congregation, in which he says:—

Return to
Prague,
1414.

Letter to his
congregation.

"You know, my brethren, that I have long instructed you in

* *Cochlæus Historiæ Hussitarum*, i. pp. 21, 22 :—Gillett.

good faith, setting before you God's Word, not things remote from the faith in Christ, nor false doctrines, for I have always sought your welfare. There will be more against me in the council of my enemies than there were against our Saviour. First, of the number of bishops and masters; next, of the princes of this world and Pharisees. But I hope in God, my Almighty Saviour, that on the ground of his own promise, and in answer to your fervent prayers, He will bestow on me wisdom and a skilful tongue, so as to be able to stand up against them. He will, too, bestow on me a spirit to despise persecution, imprisonments, and death; for we see that Christ Himself suffered for the sake of his chosen, giving us an example, that we suffer all things for Him and for our salvation. He certainly cannot perish who believes on Him, and perseveres in his truth. If my death can glorify his name, then may He hasten it, and give me grace to endure with good courage whatever evil may befall me. But if it is better for me that I should return to you, then let us beseech God for this, that I may come back to you from the council without wrong—that is, without detriment to His truth, so that we may from *thenceforth be able to come to purer knowledge of it, to destroy the doctrines of Antichrist*, and leave behind us a good example for our brethren.

“Perhaps you will never see me again in Prague; but, if God should in his mercy bring me back to you again, *I will with a more cheerful courage go on in the law of the Lord*, but especially when we shall meet together in eternal glory. God is merciful and just, and gives peace to his own here and beyond death. May He watch over you, who hath cleansed us, his sheep, through his own holy and precious blood, which blood is the everlasting pledge of our salvation; and may He grant that you may be enabled to fulfil his will, and having fulfilled it, attain to peace and eternal glory through our Lord Jesus Christ, with all those who abide in His truth.”*

He caused the following declaration to be affixed to the door of the Royal Palace:—

“To the King, to the Queen, and to the whole Court:

“I have heard from good authority that your Majesty has

* Opp. i., fol. 57, epist. 2; Bonnechose, p. 69.

received letters from the Pope, in which he exhorts you not to suffer the heresy which has been propagated for some time in your kingdom to take deeper root; though these evil reports are not owing, I thank God, to any fault of mine, yet it is my duty not to suffer the court and kingdom of Bohemia to be exposed to calumny on my account. Therefore, I have caused letters to be fixed up everywhere, in order to engage the Archbishop of Prague to vigilance in this affair by way of public advertisement, that if there be any person in Bohemia who knows I am tainted with heresy, let him repair to the court of the archbishop, and there declare what he knows; but as no accuser has appeared, the Archbishop has permitted me and mine to set out for Constance. Therefore, I beseech your Majesty, as guardian of the truth, as well as Queen and Council, that you would please to bear witness that, after having done all I could to justify myself, there is no adversary that appears against me. Besides, I make it known to all Bohemia, and to the whole world, that I shall go at the first opportunity, and make my appearance in the council at which the Pope is to preside, to the end that if there be any one who suspects me of heresy, he may repair thither, and demonstrate before the Pope and the doctors, whether I ever held and taught any false or erroneous opinion. And if they can convince me of any error, or of having taught anything to the contrary to the Christian faith, I will readily submit to all the penalties inflicted on heretics. But I hope God will not give the victory to the unfaithful who assail the truth on this occasion.”*

The progress of Huss from Prague to Constance was marked by many pleasing incidents. In all the places through which he passed, he published notices in Bohemian, Latin, and German, offering to give any who wished to speak with him on the matter of his faith, an account of his religious convictions, and to defend himself against the charge of heresy.

In the little town of Pernau, the parish priest,

* Opp. Huss, fol. 2; Lenfant, i. 39.

Repudiates
charge of
heresy.

Progress
from Prague
to Con-
stance.

with his vicars, met him in a friendly manner, and expressed their concurrence with his views. At Nuremberg, the intelligence of his expected arrival awakened general interest, and large bodies of people came out to meet him.

The same eagerness to see him was manifested in the Suabian town of Bibrach. The noble knight, John of Chlum, who accompanied Huss, spoke with such fluency and fervour, that the people took him for a doctor of theology. In his letters Huss playfully called him the Doctor of Bibrach.

Huss reached Constance on the 3rd of November, 1414. Two of his friends gave formal notice of his arrival to the council, who confirmed the safe conduct of the emperor. His enemies from Bohemia, in anticipation of his coming, had industriously circulated many rumours to his disadvantage, and mainly that he had not condemned the writings of Wycliffe.

The city was crowded with representatives of the Romish Church and of the courts of Europe. There were present thirty cardinals, four patriarchs, twenty archbishops, one hundred and fifty bishops, with two hundred professors of universities and doctors of theology, with princes and their retinue of every order, seeking to outvie each other in outward pomp and splendour. Yet the historical and moral interest of this famous assembly has always centred in the Bohemian martyrs.

There was nothing in the imposing conclave itself worthy of respect or admiration. When it was

* Dollinger, iv, 155; Lenfant's *Hist. du Concile de Constance*, Amst., 1727; Von der Hardt *Concil. Constant.* 6 vols., 1700.

proposed to consult on the means to be adopted for the removal of abuses, it was suggested that special prayer should be offered. "Solemn processions," says the candid historian, "of various kinds had been appointed for imploring the divine blessing on the reformation of the Church. But, it must be confessed, the corruption of manners which reigned in Constance during the meeting of the council; the multitude of prostitutes who had found their way into that city; the bad example which so many set; simony which was practised during the very acts of reform: all this furnished no very promising augury of a successful result."*

The Franciscan Bernard Baptistatus, during the deliberations of the council, gives us a similar picture. "The masses, and processions, and other things we busy ourselves with, have little or no value in the sight of God, through the fault of many Pharisees, who come here and pray to God in the temple." "The prelates, alas! have come to such extreme pride, that they hardly consider the people worthy of praying to God for the same things; they hardly can join them in imploring the divine grace, or in singing the *Veni Creator Spiritus*. He distinguishes different classes of Pharisees assembled at the council. Graduates, who never attended mass, sermons, or processions; holders of benefices; also parish priests, lazy, immersed in the business of the world, without devotion; men who served not God, but lived after the flesh. A second class were those who visited the Lord's temple, but whilst there

Character
of the
Council.

* Neander, ix. 153.

whispered falsehoods, laughed and made fun, slept, or carried on indecent conversation. A third class were those who came to church with a long train of attendants, standing in the way of processions about on all sides." But we need not go through the category. The preacher closes his description in these astounding terms: "The court of Rome is not a divine court, but a court of devils."*

The main business of the council was the deposition of the rival Popes. Three men, supported by different parties, claimed allegiance as Sovereign Pontiffs; and without careful management it might happen that a fourth head as worthless as each of the two who, by intrigue or violence, had reached the summit of their ecclesiastical ambition. John XXIII., Gregory XII., and Benedict XIII., were intimidated or cajoled into the abdication of their office. It was intended, during the interregnum, or headless state of the Church, to correct some of the gross abuses of the Papacy; but in this the reforming party were defeated. Martin V. was elected, and, in violation of the pledges given previously to his supporters, broke up the council, and threatened all with excommunication who should refer any case for trial and adjudication except to himself.

In violation of the "safe-conduct," Huss was treacherously apprehended at Constance, and conveyed in the first place to the house of the chanter of the cathedral, where he was detained eight days, and from thence, on the 6th of December, removed to a

Deposition
of the
Popes.

Imprison-
ment and
sufferings
of Huss.

* Von der Hardt, tom. i. p. 881; Neander, ix. p. 158.

Dominican convent on the banks of the Rhine, where the river leaves the lake of Constance. The aim of his ecclesiastical tormentors appears to have been to reduce him to compliance with their views by physical suffering. Indignant at his treatment, John of Chlum demanded that he should be set free, and threatened to break open the prison by force if the doors were not voluntarily thrown open. He remonstrated with the Pope and the emperor, but to no purpose.

Huss found alleviation in his bonds and affliction in the outflow of pastoral sympathy with his congregation at Bethlehem Chapel. Night and day they occupied his thoughts, and whenever he could find opportunity he wrote letters to comfort them and to strengthen their faith.

He related a dream, in a letter to John of Chlum, he had in prison, in which certain persons destroyed the pictures of Christ on the walls of the chapel, which were restored in a more beautiful form, to the delight of the people. The Knight of Chlum, in reply, recommended Huss to dismiss all such fancies for the present, but expounded the dream in the following manner: "The picture of Christ painted on the wall of Bethlehem Chapel, is the life of Christ, which we are to imitate; the immovable words of Holy Scripture which are there inscribed, are his words which we are to follow. The enemies of the cross of Christ seek to destroy both in the night, because the Sun of righteousness has gone down to them, by reason of their wicked lives; and they seek to bring both into oblivion among men. But, at the morning dawn,

when the Sun of righteousness arises, the preachers restore both after a more glorious manner, proclaiming that which had been said in the ear, and was nearly forgotten, from the housetops; and from all this will proceed great joy to Christendom. And though the 'goose' (Huss) is now brought down by sickness, and next may be laid a sacrifice on the altar, yet will she hereafter, awaking, as it were, from the sleep of this life, with Him who dwells in heaven, laugh and hold them in derision, who are the destroyers at once of Christ's image and of Scripture. Nay, even in this present life, she will, with God's help, still restore these pictures, and those words of Scripture, to the flock and her friends with glowing zeal."

Huss accepted this interpretation, and said: "Though Cato tells us that we ought not to care for dreams, and though God's commandment settles it clearly that we are not to pry into the interpretation of dreams—yet I hope that the life of Christ which, by my preaching in Bethlehem, has been transcribed upon the hearts of men, and which they meant to destroy there, first by forbidding preaching in the chapels and in Bethlehem, next by tearing down Bethlehem itself, that this life of Christ will be better transcribed by a great number of better preachers than I am, to the joy of the people who love the life of Christ, over which I shall, as the Doctor of Bibrach says, rejoice when I awake—that is, rise from the dead."*

The efforts of the friends of Huss to secure for him liberation or relief, for a long time proved un-

* Opp. fol. 71; Epist. xliv. xlv. xlv.

availing. On the 24th of March, the emperor delivered him over to the surveillance of the Bishop of Constance who, at four o'clock the next morning, had him removed in chains to the castle of Gottleben, where his situation was changed much for the worse. His prison was a tower. In the daytime he was chained, yet so as to be able to move about; at night, on his bed, he was chained by the hand to a post. His keepers, who had shown him kindness, were removed, and he was committed to the charge of men who treated him with unmitigated severity. His friends were not allowed to visit him, and the maladies from which he suffered so increased that his life was in danger. He was removed eventually in the beginning of June to Constance, and a prison was assigned to him in a Franciscan convent.

Prior to the public hearing of Huss, two questions engaged the special attention of the council—that of Wycliffe's writings, and the matter of the cup.

Arundel had previously applied to John XXIII. to condemn the articles of Wycliffe, and, in addition, that his body should be exhumed and cast upon a dunghill; but a more formal and solemn condemnation was now demanded.

Forty-five articles of heretical doctrine were read before the council, May 15th, 1415, and the Archbishop of Genoa began to read two hundred and sixty more articles; but to save time, the Act of Condemnation was passed without the formality of hearing the particulars. The council decreed that the bones of the English reformer should be dug up

Removed to
the castle
of Gottle-
ben.

Condemna-
tion of
Wycliffe's
articles,
1414, 1415.

(if they could be distinguished from the bones of the faithful), and cast upon a dunghill. At a subsequent session, on July 6th, sixty additional articles were read, and the Bishop of Concordia read a sentence to this effect, that "the council in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ reproves and condemns all and every one of those articles by this perpetual decree, forbidding all catholics, on pain of the anathema, to teach, preach, and hold any of those articles, and commanding all the ordinaries of places, and the inquisitors of the crime of heresy, to keep a watchful eye, and to punish the contraveners according to the canons.*

Intelligence was brought to the council that Jacobellus (James von Misa), a priest in Prague, was defending the restoration of the cup to the laity, with the connivance or sanction of Huss. The origin of the change which deprived the people of the chalice at the Lord's Supper is curious. According to the doctrine of transubstantiation, Christ "in all his integrity," combining the human nature with the divine, was to be found in every particle of the consecrated elements. Every atom of the bread, every drop of wine used at the sacrament became, in consequence, the object of superstitious awe. The recipient, so instructed, felt the greatest dread lest any portion of the elements should be wasted or fall to the ground. The danger of accident was supposed to arise chiefly from the use of the cup. To guard against the possibility of dropping the wine, a tube in some instances was adopted to conduct it

Question of
the cup.

* Lenfant, i. 420; Opp. Huss, tom. i. fol. 27; Von der Hardt, iv. p. 391.

safely to the mouth. 'With the utmost precaution, however, the disaster would still occur.* It was deemed expedient, therefore, to confine the use of the cup to the celebrant, who might be supposed to exercise peculiar care—the rest of the communicants were to be content with the bread. To justify this change a new doctrine was invented, called "concomitancy," by which it was maintained

Doctrine of
Concomi-
tancy.

that Christ existed so entirely and so indivisibly in either element, that all who were partakers of the consecrated host received therein his body and his blood.† It was further pretended that, on close scrutiny, the blood might be traced in the consecrated bread. To inspire their confidence, the credulous people were assured on the authority of Alexander Hales that the new doctrine had been confirmed by a miracle. Some friars having a desire to receive the communion in both kinds, it happened that as the priest was breaking bread, the whole patten, or cover of the chalice, was filled with blood, to the great astonishment of the people; but the priest afterwards rejoining the broken pieces of the wafer, the blood also united with it again, and everything was restored to its first state. This so quieted the minds of the simple friars that they never desired again to receive the communion of both kinds. Huss denounced these shameful impostures;‡ but it does not appear that in Prague he had administered the cup to the laity.

Jacobel administered the sacrament in both

* Spittler, *Gesh. des Kelches im Abendmahl*.

† Anselm, *Epist. lib. iv. p. 117*.

‡ Hus. *Oper. fol. 154, 162*; Lenfant, *i. cap. xxi*.

kinds to the people in several churches in Prague and at the Bethlehem Chapel. He wrote ^{Treatises of} several treatises in which he defended ^{Jacobel.} the practice from the Holy Scriptures, the testimony of the fathers, and several of the Popes, and by the canon law. He says, "it is more clear than daylight from these authorities that the communion of the venerable sacrament of the body and blood of our Lord Jesus ought to be administered to all Christians in the species of bread and wine—that is, the word, the law, the truth. The institution and gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, his apostles, and the primitive Church, which cannot be annulled and set aside by any custom of the Church of Rome, however ancient it be, nor by the constitution, or decree of any Pope, or any council." In matters of faith he said the Scriptures are our only rule.*

The divines at Constance attempted to refute the arguments of Jacobel. One of them said, "the Church, at this day, is in a much more ^{Attempted} honourable state, and the devotion there ^{refutation.} much greater than in the primitive Church, because, at that time, the apostles were more concerned for the conversion of the Gentiles to the Christian faith, than for the ornaments and devotions of the Church and the splendour of the clergy."† In reply to the objection from the words of Christ, "Drink ye all of it," Matt. xxvi. 27, He says, "that Jesus Christ ordered all to drink of the cup, for the sake of Judas, for fear that St. Peter and the other apostles should fall into a rage against that traitor of Jesus,

* Lenfant, i. 259; Von der Hardt, pp. 800, 821.

† Von der Hardt, tom. iii. pp. 353—355.

if he had excluded him from the chalice. Referring to the danger of letting some portion of the wine fall to the ground, he cites the decree of Pope Pius, which orders that, if through the neglect, the priest should let any drops of the blood of Jesus Christ fall on the ground, or on the linen or the woollen cloth, such priest shall perform forty days' penance, and be suspended for a certain time from the celebration of the mass. He shall also lick up the drop which is fallen, and burn the linen or the woollen on which it fell. If it fell on a stone, it shall be scraped up, and the scraping carried into the vestry,"* and adds, the following horrible comment: "If the priests are so severely punished for shedding a drop of the blood through negligence; if the linen and the woollen must be burnt, with much more reason ought the laity, who wet their beards or clothes with the blood of Jesus Christ, to be burnt with their clothes and beards on, and to be sent to hell, unless they do penance."

Another opponent of Jacobel insisted that the observances of the Church should correspond with its advanced condition. "The primitive Church," he says, "is rite, custom, the ceremonies of Church-believers in matters concerning faith since the time of the apostles and the seventy-two disciples; but modern Church is rite, custom, and the ceremony of the Church, touching the faith, from Sylvester to this day. And, to take the word modern in a more strict sense—the modern Church may be computed for two hundred or a hundred years."

"Now," he adds, "it must be observed that in

* De Conscr. DISTRU. II. CAP. 27.

the primitive Church everything was done in a plainer style, and with more simplicity, than in the modern Church, where everything is performed with more dignity. In the primitive Church they baptized with common water; now they baptize with holy water. In the primitive Church the people communicated in both kinds, as at Corinth; but the modern Church, putting all things into a better form, has reduced the communion to one kind only: for the apostles and their followers omitted several things which the modern Church has supplied." *

Jacobel met his antagonists with remarkable firmness. He cited a passage from the writings of Simeon de Caisca, an Italian divine of the ^{Firmness} fourteenth century, to the effect, "that, if ^{of Jacobel.} we refuse to believe Jesus Christ in matters of faith and practice, there is no room to hope that we should believe any other teacher, because the authority of Jesus Christ is of infinitely more weight than the authorities of all the angels and of all the dead, though they should rise again and show the people here below Paradise and hell." † As to custom, Jacobel cites three eminent fathers, who declare that the truth is not to be displaced by it. "The truth," says Cyprian, "ought to be absolutely preferred before all customs, how ancient and public soever; and every usage contrary to the truth ought to be abolished." "When the truth," says Augustin, "is manifest, custom must yield to it: for St. Peter, who was for circumcision, yielded to Paul, who preached the truth." "You will object

* Lenfant, i. 282; Von der Hardt, tom. iii. pp. 694—697.

† Lenfant, i. 367; Von der Hardt, tom. iii. p. 595.

to the custom, perhaps," said Gregory, "but it must be observed that our Lord has said, '*I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life,*' and not '*I am custom.*'"* "Obey the Church," said the opponents of Jacobel. He replied by holding up a work intitled, "The Golden Mirror of the Pope, his Court, the Prelates, and other of the Clergy," in which the author, Paul l'Anglois, says, "The truth is that the whole court of Rome, from the sole of the foot to the crown of the head, is blinded with manifest and public error. It has made almost all parts of the world drunk with the poison of its errors, as if it thought to measure out the divine Almighty power after its own fancy. Everybody murmurs at it, but nobody complains of it."

In reply to the charge of sacrilege, Jacobel maintains, on the authority of Popes and fathers, that it is not lawful either for the Pope or emperor to alter a tittle of what is prescribed in the law and in the gospel.† "You are a heretic," said the doctors of Constance. "Admit," replied Jacobel, "it were possible that Jesus Christ could appear in the midst of the council of Constance with His primitive Church, His apostolical life, and His evangelical practice; and admit that He should say in full assembly, as He did at Capernaum, 'Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of Man, and drink his blood,' etc.; and that ye should go to celebrate the sacrament as He Himself instituted it: think ye that, as things stand at present, He would obtain a hearing, or find a place in the council?"

Replies to
the charge
of sacrilege.

* Lenfant, i. 369; Von der Hardt, tom. iii. p. 608.

† Lenfant, i. 370.

There would really be difficulty in it ; and, according to all appearance, instead of retracting, as the auditors at Capernaum did, they would declare Jesus Christ a heretic, and condemn Him by saying, ‘That is not the custom.’ In the condemnation of a heretic, whether real or pretended, this is the course of the council : in the first place they defame him ; then they cite him ; after which they excommunicate him ; and finally seize him and degrade him, by cursing him in body and soul as far as in them lieth, and deliver him over to the secular arm. And as the priests of the Jews said, ‘If thou let this man go, thou art not Cæsar’s friend,’ so say they, ‘Mr. Magistrate, this man is under your jurisdiction, and the Church can do nothing more with him.’ *

During this exciting discussion, May 31st, 1415, John of Chlum wrote to Huss: “We pray you earnestly to consign to paper your final opinion relative to the communion of the cup, and your reasons therefor, in order that it may be communicated to our friends in proper season ; for there exists some difference on the subject amongst the brethren, and many are troubled thereby. They refer the matter to you and to your writings.” † “As to what touches the communion of the cup,” Huss replies, “You possess the writing in which I have advanced my opinion on the subject, and my reasons for holding it. I have nothing further to say, except that the Scriptures and the Epistles of Paul

Letter of
John of
Chlum.

Reply of
Huss.

* Lenfant, i. 371, 372.

† Hist. et Monum. Johann Huss ; Epist. xlvii. xlviii. ; Bonnechose, pp. 122, 123.

prescribe this practice, and that it was in use in the primitive Church. If possible, obtain permission (bullam) for those who are anxious to partake of it from religious motives to do so ; but be guided in your conduct therein by circumstances."

The council ultimately issued a decree, June 15th, 1415, to this effect : "Whereas, in some parts of the world, there are persons so rash as to assert that Christians ought to receive the Holy Sacrament of the Eucharist in the two kinds of bread and wine, and who do publicly give the communion to the laity, not only under the species of bread, but that of wine also, etc. ; the sacred

Decree of
the Council,
1415.

council, being desirous to provide for the salvation of believers, after the mature deliberation of several doctors, declares, decrees, and determines, that though *Jesus Christ instituted and administered the venerable sacrament to his apostles after supper in the two kinds of bread and wine*, yet the laudable authority of the sacred canons, and the approved custom of the Church, hath observed, and doth observe, that this sacrament ought not to be celebrated after supper, nor to be taken by believers otherwise than fasting, except in case of sickness and any other necessity granted or admitted according to law, or by the Church. And, as this custom was reasonably introduced for avoiding certain dangers and scandals, there was the same, and even greater, reason for introducing and observing this rule, viz. : That though *in the primitive Church this sacrament was received by the believers in both kinds*, yet afterwards it was received in both kinds by the officiating priest only, and in the species of bread only by the laity—

because it ought to be believed firmly and undoubtedly, that the whole body and blood of Jesus Christ is truly contained under the species of bread, as well as under the species of wine. For the which cause, this custom, reasonably introduced by the Church and by the holy fathers, and observed for a very long time after, ought to be regarded as a law, which it is not allowable to reject or alter at pleasure, without the authority of the Church. From whence it follows that to say it is sacrilegious or unlawful to observe this custom or this law, ought to be deemed an error. And they who obstinately maintain the contrary to what is established above ought to be expelled as heretics, and severely punished by their diocesans, and by the inquisitors of the faith in the kingdoms or provinces where they shall presume to infringe the canon laws wholesomely established in favour of the Catholic faith against heretics and their abettors.” *

After this decree, Huss wrote to his friend, the Lord Haulikon, June 21, 1415:—

“As a preacher of the Word of Christ, my very dear brother, do not oppose the administering of the cup, it being a sacrament instituted by Jesus Christ and his apostles. No text of Scripture is opposed to it, but only custom; and I think this was established only through negligence and forgetfulness. But it is not custom which we should follow, but the example of Christ. The council, alleging custom as a motive, has declared the communion of the cup by laymen to be an error, and has ordained that whosoever should practise it shall be punished as an heretic if he did not amend this practice. Already, then, has the malice of men condemned as an error an institution of Christ. I conjure you, by the love of God, not to attack Master Jacobel, that there may not be any

Huss on administering the cup, 1415.

* Lenfant, i. 386.

division amongst the faithful, and that Satan may not find a new subject for joy. Prepare yourself as quickly as possible, my dear brother, to suffer for the communion of the cup. Lay aside all fear, which is unworthy of you, and remain firm in the truth of Christ; exhorting the other brethren by the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. I think that they will give you in support of the cup what I have written at Constance. Salute the faithful in Christ. Written in irons, on the eve of the day of the Ten Thousand." *

We return to the trial of Huss. On the 5th of June, 1415, after being confined about half a year, it was determined to give him a hearing before the council. The concourse was immense. Various charges had been prepared, as the result of private examinations. When the first accusation was read, and the call was made for his reply, Huss appealed, in justification of his views, to the Scriptures. Met with shouts of contempt and derision, he remained silent, and this reticence was interpreted as an admission of guilt.

On the following day (June 6th) Huss wrote to his friends:—

"To-morrow, at noon, I am to answer, first, whether any of the articles extracted from my writings is erroneous, and whether I will pledge myself to abjure it, and henceforth teach the contrary; secondly, whether I will confess that I have preached those articles which it shall be proved on good testimony that I have preached; third, whether I will abjure these. May God in his mercy so order it, that the emperor may be present to hear the words that my gracious Saviour shall be pleased to put in my mouth." It was his intention to submit in writing the following statement:—"I, John, servant of Christ, will not declare that any of the articles extracted from my writings are false, lest I condemn the declarations of holy teachers, and particularly of St. Augustine. Secondly, I will not confess that I have as-

* Hist. et Monum. Johann Huss; Epist. xvi.; Bonnechose, pp. 153, 154.

serted, preached, and believed the articles of which I am accused by false witnesses. Thirdly, I will not abjure, lest by so doing I subject myself to the guilt of perjury."*

On the 7th of June, Huss was again brought before the council. Some Englishmen (Robert, Earl of Warwick, and Robert Hallam, ^{Second} Bishop of Salisbury)† who were present ^{hearing.} charged the prisoner with holding sentiments similar to those of Wycliffe. A long and irregular dispute arose. Cardinal Francis Zabarella, to bring the matter to a close, said: "Thou knowest, Master Huss, that by the mouth of two or three witnesses every word should be established; but now as thou seest the testimony of twenty men, thereabouts—men who ought to be believed, and of the highest consideration—some of whom have themselves heard thee teach, while others testify to what they have heard, and to the common report; and all furnish the strongest grounds of evidence for their statements. We must, therefore, believe them. I see not how thou canst still maintain thy cause against so many distinguished men." "But," replied Huss, "I call God and my conscience to witness, that I have not so taught, and that it never entered my mind so to teach, as these persons have the hardihood to say I have, testifying against me what I have never heard. Were there a great many more, still I esteem the testimony of my God and of my conscience higher than the judgments of all my adversaries, about which I do not trouble myself."

The writings of Wycliffe were again brought under review. Huss said that all he had ever

* Opp. fol. 65; 2 Epist. xxvii.

† Cotton MSS.; Julius, Epist. iv.

demanded was, that proof should be drawn from Holy Scripture to justify the condemnation of the propositions of Wycliffe which were to be condemned. He then entered into a full and dispassionate account of the course of the dispute concerning the writings of the English reformer, until the time of his appeal to Christ.

The question was now put to Huss, Whether the Pope had given him leave to break away from his own jurisdiction, and appeal to another tribunal; and whether it was permitted to appeal to Christ?

He replied: "This I openly maintain before you all, that there is not a more just nor a more effectual appeal than to appeal to Christ; for to appeal means, according to law, nothing but this: in case of oppression, from an inferior judge to invoke the aid of a higher one. And now what higher judge is there than Christ? Who can get at the truth of a cause in a more righteous and truthful manner than He? For He cannot be deceived, neither can He err. Who can more easily afford help to the poor and oppressed?"

Huss was further charged with having said that he wished his soul might be where the soul of Wycliffe was. He admitted that he had said this. It was insinuated, moreover, that Huss had set at defiance the power of the emperor; and in the course of the discussion Sigismund informed the council that he had granted the safe-conduct to Huss; but he said he would not undertake to protect his errors; he would sooner prepare the faggots for him with his own hand, than suffer him to go any longer with the same obstinacy as before.

Called to
account for
his appeal
to Christ.

By these several stages the managers of the council prepared the way for the destruction of their victim. The appeal to the Pope was all a pretence. His Holiness had already run away in the night from Constance, and was shortly to abdicate his office.

The civil power was gained on the side of the opponents of Huss, and to make all sure the Parisian party indoctrinated the council with their views. Gerson, in particular, prepared a discourse, in which he set forth the principles on which ecclesiastical uniformity may be enforced by law in every age. His theory is worthy of notice, in order to comprehend the grounds on which Huss was ultimately sacrificed. He denied the right of interpreting Scripture when not called to it by the Church, to which he assigned the sole privilege of defining its meaning. In his judgment, the council at Constance was the most perfect representative body of the Church. Whatever articles of faith were set forth or recognized were to be believed; and not only to be accepted cordially, but professed in the terms that the council should dictate, on pain of imprisonment or death. The refractory or obstinate heretic might be carefully instructed or gently persuaded to adopt the course prescribed; but failing in implicit obedience, he must be given up to the secular power. No matter, either, how trifling the deflection from the infallible rule might seem. It was not a question of reason or of conscience that had to be determined, nor yet of Scripture, but simply and alone that of conformity to the Church. "Miracles," said Gerson,

“ought not to be required for the confirmation of the ancient Church doctrines; the authority of councils, the utterances of all the Church teachers, were sufficient. To these common authorities every individual should submit his private judgment. He who hears not this voice, would not hear though one should rise from the dead. It only remains, then, to employ the secular sword against those who will not hear the voice of the Church.”

The proud, imperious, and profligate men who assembled at Constance, who could not preserve sufficient decorum to unite in common supplication for the divine blessing, according to this theory, claimed to be *the Church*, and assumed authority to dictate what all men should believe, even though their decree might be directly contrary to the positive commands of Christ.

It is touching to observe that, notwithstanding the settled purpose of his adversaries to compass his death, Huss still indulged the hope of deliverance. At the close of the examination he was placed under the care of the Bishop of Riga and conducted back to prison. He wrote on the same day to his friends:—

“The Almighty God gave me to day a strong and courageous heart. Two of the articles of complaint against me have been abandoned. I now hope, by the grace of God, that several others will be relinquished. They cry out, nearly all of them, like the Jews against our Master, Christ. Oh, if a hearing were granted me, in which I could reply to such arguments as they might bring against the articles contained in my treatises. Then, believe I, would many of those who cry out, be compelled to be dumb—as God in heaven wills, so let it be.”*

Letter of
Huss.

* Opp. i., fol 69; 2 Epist. 36.

On the 8th of June, Huss was brought up for his third examination. The discussion, if it may be so termed, took a wider range than before, and embraced many points arising out of the book entitled, "*De Ecclesia*." As might be expected there was no fair reasoning. D'Ailly and Gerson were the chief speakers, assisted by Paletz, the old enemy of Huss, with Bola. The interlocutors acted in character. Huss was charged with denying the necessity of a visible Head to the Church. "Yes," he replied, "I say it, that the Church, under the apostles, was infinitely better governed than it is at the present time; *and what hinders that Christ should not better govern by his true disciples* without such monsters of supreme heads as they now are? And mark, we have no such supreme head at present, and yet Christ does not cease to govern the Church." This allusion to the absence of Pope John XXIII., who had just taken flight, excited a laugh in the council.

At the close of the examination, Cardinal D'Ailly said to Huss: "Thou hast heard how many, and what abominable charges are brought against thee; therefore it is thy duty to consider what thou intendest to do. Two ways are proposed to thee by the council, of which thou must needs choose one. First, that thou shouldest submit thyself suppliantly to the judgment of the council, and bear, without murmuring, whatever it may please to ordain. If that is done, we shall, out of regard to the two sovereigns, and from our desire for thy welfare,

proceed against thee with all gentleness and humanity ; but if thou still proposest to defend some of the articles which have now been laid before us, and demandest to be heard still further, we shall not deny thee this privilege. But thou must bear in mind that there are here men of so much weight, and so much knowledge, that have so well settled and strong reasons against thy articles, that I fear it will redound to thy great injury, to thy great danger, if thou undertakest to defend them any longer—I speak this in the way of exhortation, and not as thy judge.” Other members of the council followed in the same strain.

Huss replied : “ Reverend fathers ! I have already often said that I came here voluntarily, Reply of
Huss. not for the purpose of defending anything obstinately, but of cheerfully submitting to be taught better, if in anything I have erred. I beg, therefore, that opportunity may be allowed me to explain my opinions further ; and if I do not adduce good and true reasons for them, then I will gladly, as you require, submit to be instructed by you.”

“ Mark how cunningly he speaks,” exclaimed one in the council. “ He says *instructed*, not corrected, not decided.”

“ Nay, as you please,” rejoined Huss ; “ let it be instruction, correction, or decision, *for I call God to witness that I speak nothing but from my heart.*”

Taking advantage of this expression, and regardless of the implied qualification, D’Ailly said : “ Since thou dost submit thyself to the instruction and mercy of the council, know that this has been resolved upon by near sixty doctors, of whom some

have already gone away, whose places have been taken by the Parisians; and it has been confirmed unanimously by the council: First, that thou humbly declare that thou didst err in those articles that have been produced against thee; next, that thou promisest, on thy oath, neither to hold nor to teach such opinions any longer; thirdly, that thou dost publicly recant all those articles." These requirements were urged by others.

Huss replied: "I repeat that I am ready to be instructed by the council, *but I beseech and conjure you, by Him who is God of us all, that you do not force me to do what I cannot do without contradicting my conscience*, and without danger of eternal damnation; that you do not force me to renounce upon my oath all the articles which have been brought against me: for I know that to abjure, means to renounce a previously cherished error. As now many articles have been imputed to me, which to hold or teach never entered my thoughts, how can I renounce them by an oath? But as regards those articles which really belong to me, I will cheerfully do what you require, *if any one can persuade me to another opinion*."

Cannot
violate his
conscience.

"Why mayest thou not," said the emperor, "with good conscience, renounce all that has been charged upon thee by false witnesses? I do not hesitate to abjure all possible errors; yet from this it by no means follows that I have ever taught such errors."

Suggestion
of the
Emperor

Huss replied: "Most gracious emperor, the word *abjure* means something different from that which your majesty expresses by it."

Cardinal Zabarella interposed: "There will be handed thee," he said, "a tolerably mild
Zabarella's mild form of abjuration. form of abjuration; and then thou canst easily make up thy mind whether thou wilt make it or not."

The emperor reiterated the warning given before by D'Ailly: "Thou hast heard that two ways are proposed to thee: first, that thou shouldest publicly renounce those doctrines which have now been publicly condemned, and submit thyself to the judgment of the council; which, if thou doest, thou wilt experience the mercy of the council. But if thou dost persist in defending thy opinions, the council will no doubt understand how to deal with thee according to the laws."

Huss answered: "Most gracious emperor, I make no resistance to anything the council may
Huss desires to explain. decide with regard to me. *I except but one thing—doing wrong to God and to my conscience,* and saying that I have taught errors which never entered my thoughts. But I entreat that liberty may be granted me from you to explain my opinions still further, so as to give a sufficient answer to some things objected to me; namely, concerning the offices of the Church."

"Thou art old enough," said the emperor, "and canst not fail to understand what I said to thee yesterday and to-day. We cannot do otherwise than believe trustworthy witnesses. If, according to Scriptures, by two or three witnesses every word shall be established, how much more shall this hold good, where the witnesses are so many and so great men. If, then, thou art reasonable, thou wilt accept

with contrite heart the penance appointed thee by the council, and renounce manifold errors, and promise on thy oath never to hold forth the like for the future. If not, there are laws according to which thou wilt be judged by the council."

The harassing logomachy continued some time longer, but we omit the details. The invincible confessor stood firmly to the last by his simple declaration not to sophisticate his conscience. He had passed through months of painful and wasting sickness, and was greatly enfeebled by a succession of violent attacks. He had to confront a host of overbearing and intolerant men, who assailed him without courtesy or consideration at different points, but he never lost his presence of mind—his faith remained unshaken—and he was enabled, with simplicity and wonderful equanimity, to meet every opponent in the spirit of humility and yet with becoming firmness.

Fortitude
of Huss.

The close of the audience left Huss completely exhausted, and when led away to his cell, after the tension of mind kept up for so many hours, we may well suppose that he was almost overpowered. His faithful friend, John of Chlum, came to visit him, and took his hand to express in silence more eloquent than in words his affectionate sympathy and sincere admiration and respect. Referring to this simple incident, Huss says: "Oh, what joy did I feel from the pressure of the hand of Lord John, which he was not ashamed to give me—the wretched outcast heretic in my chains."*

On the 10th of June, Huss wrote a letter to the

* Opp. i., fol. 82; Epist. xxxiii.

people of Bohemia, exhorting them to adhere to the truth which he had always set before them, and giving them practical counsel. He enjoined them not to follow him in anything that had ever been uttered or written by him, contrary to divine truth, and adds: "I wrote this letter in prison, and in chains, expecting on the morrow to receive my sentence of death, full of hope in God, that I shall not swerve from the truth, nor abjure errors imputed to me by false witnesses. What a gracious God has wrought in me, and how He stands by me in wonderful trials. All this you will understand when we shall meet together with our Lord God, through his grace, in eternal joy."

Letter to
the people
of Bohemia.

We have already seen that Cardinal Zabarella promised Huss a "mild form of reconciliation." An unknown friend, probably acting in concert with the cardinal, submitted the terms which he might adopt to this effect: "Besides the protestations made before by me, and which I hereby renew, I protest, moreover, that though a great deal has been charged against me, which never entered my thoughts, yet I submit in all that has been charged against me, or extracted from my books, or even uttered against me by witnesses, humbly to the merciful direction, determination, and correction of the council; and agree to abjure, to recant, to submit to such merciful penance as may be imposed upon me; and to do all that the council may, in its goodness, see fit to determine for my salvation, commending myself, with all submission, to its mercy." Neander sup-

Compro-
mise pro-
posed.

plies us with a key to the character of this friendly adviser. "We may conjecture," he says, "that he was one of those monks, the so-called Friends of God, who, like Tauler's Staupitz, had in the solitude of their convents been led through many conflicts of soul, and inward experiences, to the knowledge of the great cardinal truth of the gospel, and to repose their trust in Christ *alone* as their Saviour, although, at the same time, they still clung fast, as did Luther also at the beginning, to the whole ancient church system, which itself became transfigured to their eyes, as viewed from that central point of their whole Christian life. It was a principle with these men never to assume the position of polemics, but rather to work positively in preparing the way for the regeneration of the Church, whose corruption they deeply felt, beginning at the very centre of Christianity." This gentle method of yielding, Huss could not adopt, however kindly intended :—

Decision of
Huss.

"May the Almighty Father," he wrote in reply, "the most wise and gracious God, bestow on my father, who is so kind to me for Christ's sake, the eternal life of glory! I am very grateful, most reverend father, for your paternal goodness. I do not venture to submit to the council in the form which has been laid before me; first, because I should have to condemn many truths which they, as I have heard from themselves, call scandalous! Next, because I should perjure myself by such abjuration, since I should have to declare myself guilty of those errors, and thus give great scandal to the people of God, who have heard the contrary from me in my preaching. If then, that Eleazar, of whom it is written in the Books of the Maccabees, that he would not falsely confess that he had eaten flesh forbidden by the law, lest he might act against God and leave a bad example to those who should come after him—how should I, though an unworthy

priest of the *new* law, through a fear of punishment, which will soon be over, think of transgressing the law of God with a more grievous sin ; first, by departing from the truth ; secondly, by incurring the guilt of perjury ; and thirdly, by giving scandal to my neighbour ? It would be far better for me to die than, in seeking to escape a momentary punishment, to fall into the hands of God, and perhaps, afterwards, into eternal fire and eternal shame. And since I have appealed to the Lord Jesus Christ, the Almighty and most wise Judge, committing into his hands *His own cause*, I therefore abide his sentence, and his most holy decision, knowing that He will not judge by false evidence and fallible councils, but according to the truth, and to every man's deserts."

The unknown friend of Huss submitted further arguments to show him how he might evade, in the matter any personal responsibility ; but he could not consent to be hoodwinked as to the course of duty, even to save his life. Similar attempts to turn him from his purpose were made by different persons who visited him in prison, but they found him invulnerable at every point.

At the instance of the emperor, four prelates came to his prison on the 5th of July, to know his final determination. His tried and noble friend, John de Chlum, said : " Master John, I am an unlearned man, and therefore unable to instruct one like you ; but allow me to say, that if you know yourself guilty of any of those errors which are alleged against you, do not out of false shame refuse to confess it. But I would be the last man to advise you to deny what you know to be the truth, though the most dreadful punishment awaits you." Huss replied with tears : " Verily, as I have often said, I take the most high God to witness, that I am ready, with all my heart,

Visit of
prelates to
Huss in
prison.

to change my mind, if the council will better instruct me out of the holy Scriptures."

One of the bishops said: "But I would never be so arrogant as to prefer my own judgment to that of the whole council." "Neither do I," rejoined Huss; "I only say, if the meanest of them will convict me of error, I will perform whatever is enjoined of me." "See," said another bishop, "how obstinate he is."

In anticipation of his martyrdom, Huss continued to write to his flock:

"I know nothing," he said, "concerning Jerome, my faithful friend, unless that he is detained in a wretched prison, waiting, like myself, for death, on account of that faith which he so courageously spread through Bohemia. But the Bohemians, our most cruel adversaries, have delivered us to the power of other enemies and to their chains. Pray to God for them. I conjure you, inhabitants of Prague, above all to love my chapel of Bethlehem, and to have the Word of God preached there, should God permit it. The fury of Satan is stirred up against that place. Seeing that the power of darkness was weakened in it, he has excited the parochial clergy against that temple. Farewell letters.

"I hope the Word of God will be preached there with more success by others than by me, a weak and infirm man. Lastly, I conjure you to love one another, to shut out no one from the path of divine truth, and to watch that the upright be not oppressed with violence. Amen."*

Huss appeared before the council for the last time on July 6th, 1415. The Bishop of Riga and a military guard conducted him to the centre of the church, where a platform was erected, and on a table lay the vestments of a priest. Huss knelt down and prayed, while the Bishop of Lodi ascended the pulpit, and Huss before the council the last time.

* Bonnechose, 144—147.

preached from Rom. vi. 6, "*That the body of sin might be destroyed.*"

The spare, attenuated, physical frame of the martyr, the preacher described as the incarnation of sin. Turning to the emperor, who was seated upon his throne, he pointed to the prisoner, and said: "Destroy all heresies and errors, but chiefly that obstinate heretic, so shalt thou purchase to thyself immortal honour." The Bishop of Concordia then commanded all men to keep silence, on pain of excommunication and two months' imprisonment. Sixty articles against him were next read. Huss attempted to reply, but was silenced instantly by the Bishop of Cambray and the Bishop of Florence. He was upbraided with having appealed to Christ when arraigned by his ecclesiastical superiors. He answered, "O Lord Jesus, whose Word is thus openly vilified, didst Thou not, when evil entreated, commit thy cause to thy Father; leaving us an example, that when we are oppressed, we should have recourse to the judgment of God? Yes! I did appeal to Him! and why? Because He can neither be corrupted by bribes, nor deceived by false witnesses, nor seduced by artifice."

Sentence was passed to the following effect: "That for several years John Huss had seduced
 Sentence
 passed. and scandalized the people by the dissemination of many doctrines, manifestly heretical and condemned by the Church, *especially those of John Wycliffe*. That he had obstinately trampled upon the keys of the Church and ecclesiastical censures. *That he had appealed to Jesus Christ as sovereign Judge*, to the contempt of the ordinary

judges of the Church; and that such an appeal was injurious, scandalous, and made in derision of ecclesiastical authority. That he had persisted to the last in his errors, and even maintained them in full council. It is therefore ordained that he be publicly deposed and degraded from holy orders, as an obstinate heretic."

The Archbishop of Milan, assisted by five other prelates, proceeded to enrobe him, and put a chalice into his hand. "So," said he, "the Jews ^{Degradation} put a garment on Christ to mock Him." ^{of Huss.}

When completely appalled, Huss was once more exhorted to retract. With deep emotion he replied: "These lords and bishops exhort me to profess before you that I have erred; to which, indeed, if it were a mere human concern, I might be induced; but now I am in the sight of God, and cannot do so without dishonouring the truth, wounding my own conscience, and causing weak brethren to offend. Rather let this vile body die, than their salvation should be endangered!" Upon this they took the chalice from his hand, saying, "O cursed Judas, thus we take from thee the cup of salvation!" "Aye," he replied, "but I shall drink of it this day in the kingdom of my father." They stripped off his garments one by one with many curses, and put a high paper mitre on his head, on which were painted three devils, with the inscription "Heresiarch." "This is better," said Huss, "than the crown of thorns which my Lord bore for me." "We commit thy soul unto the devil," said the priestly tormentors." "But I," replied the martyr, "commend it to Jesus Christ."

Huss, cast forth from the Church, was now delivered unto the secular arm. At the command of the emperor, Duke Louis of Bavaria consigned him to the executioners, who led him out to the field of Bruhl, beyond the western gate of Constance, and a mile along the Zurich road, amidst a crowd of spectators. Observing a pile of his books burning before the doors of the church, Huss smiled and passed on. On the way, he prayed and sang hymns alternately. Arrived at the place of execution, he fell on his knees and prayed, using the words of the fifty-first and thirty-first Psalms. When compelled to rise from his knees, he said, "Lord Jesus Christ! stand by me, that by thy help I may be enabled, with a strong and steadfast soul, to endure this cruel and shameful death, to which I have been condemned on account of preaching of the holy gospel and thy Word." Huss then beckoned his first prison-keepers to come near, and in the German language thanked them for their kind attentions, and assured them of his firm trust in the Saviour, his willingness to suffer, and his expectation that he should reign with Him that day. His paper crown falling off, a soldier replaced it on his head, and, with a jeer said, "He should burn with the devils he had served."

The martyr, ready to be offered up, continued to express words of faith and humble hope; but the authorities hastened to close the scene. The faggots were piled around the stake, and the executioner paused for a moment, before applying to the wood the blazing torch. The Elector Palatine and Count Oppenheim, marshal of the empire,

rode up and said to Huss, "Will you retract and save your life?" "What I have written and taught," he replied, "was in order to rescue souls from the power of the devil, and to deliver them from the tyranny of sin; and I do gladly seal what I have written and taught with my blood."

The fire was then enkindled, and above the crackling of the wood and the noise of the populace was heard the clear voice of the sufferer uttering the words, "Jesus Christ, the Son of the living God." As he was beginning to repeat this for the third time, he was stifled by the flames, which the wind drove towards him; yet his lips were seen still to move as in prayer. The wood being heaped very high, he was soon suffocated; but it was found needful to renew the fire to consume the body entirely. The ashes were carefully collected, and flung into the Rhine, "that nothing might remain on earth," his implacable persecutors said, "of so execrable a heretic."

The martyrdom of Huss at this juncture was an event of great moral significance. The interest attached to it is not that derived from the learning, eloquence, or genius of the Re-^{Its moral} former, for in none of these things was he pre-^{significance.} eminent. He was keenly sensible to reproach, and constitutionally cautious, if not timid. He advanced in his enquiries for the truth slowly and with diffidence; but whatever hesitation he felt in passing beyond the boundaries fixed by his Romish contemporaries, on simple and grand principles, he attained to undoubted certainty; and, once thoroughly con-

vinced of the truth, he held it firmly as a treasure more precious than life.

He was an example, in an age notoriously hollow and corrupt, of luminous sincerity. The part he was called to take was not that of the clear and profound theologian, neither was it permitted to him to become a great party leader. The only course open to him, denuded as he was of help, and pressed on every side by powerful and malignant foes, was to adhere to the simple confession of the truth as far as it was made known to him. But this, in reality, was the greatest service possible for any man to render at the time and under the circumstances. Ecclesiastical society was organized on principles altogether incompatible with the consistent profession of Christianity. The Church was a grand political combination, held together by a community of worldly interests. Men were willing, for the sake of power or of gain, to lose, in religious matters, their own individuality, and to prevent by the severest penalties the freedom of others. Personal conviction contrary to the system enforced by the sword was no longer tolerated. All classes of the community were alike held down by the pressure of spiritual despotism, and voluntarily enslaved. Every man exerted an influence to repress the freedom of his neighbour. Emancipation, in this state of things, could only come by the irrepressible force of conscience, manifested in the full and spontaneous confession of truth. The power to break the fatal spell was given, in the lowest extremity of weakness, to the faithful martyr of Constance. It was reserved for him to lead the way for advancing millions, and

to show the absolute limit of temporal power in matters of conscience. The rulers of the earth, ecclesiastical and civil, might kill the body; but Huss made it palpable to all men that "*after that, they have no more that they can do.*" Humble and devout people, scattered in different countries, began to understand more clearly that they were under no necessity to refrain from giving testimony to the truth they firmly believed.

Not only so; Huss distinctly enunciated positive principles of reformation capable of universal application. In the exposure and denunciation of the abuses and corruptions of the Church of Rome, he had many precursors. Even in the council of Constance itself there were not a few who had borne testimony to existing evils. A "College of Reformation" was appointed; but they failed to point out the only effectual remedy, and in the hour of trial they succumbed in weakness to the power by which they were silenced. Huss appealed to Christ as the supreme authority, and pointed to his divine example as the only infallible precedent, and there he took his final stand. He waxed valiant in the fight, and only began to realize the freedom arising from this unswerving allegiance when he was called to die. He had no time to form for himself or for others a complete theological system, or to prescribe the course to be taken by the faithful brethren, except that in all things they should follow Christ. That impressive signal given by him as he advanced to the burning pile was never forgotten.

The influence of his example was felt by his friend and fellow-labourer, JEROME OF PRAGUE. He

is described as a man of prepossessing appearance, with a lofty and expansive brow, a countenance of the Roman type, penetrating eye, lips closed with gravity and sweetness, and redundant hair gracefully flowing on his shoulders. He might have been chosen in preference to enact the part of a noble confessor in the Council Hall or in the cathedral of Constance; but he failed in the first encounter. He came to Constance in disguise, and shortly afterward returned slowly and with hesitation towards Bohemia. He was arrested near Hirschau, a small town in Suabia. At the request of the council, and by the command of the emperor, he was conducted

in chains to a convocation held on the 23rd of May, 1415. The spirit of the assembly was exceedingly violent, and many who were present clamoured for his death. After the prelates had retired, Peter of Mladenowic, sent by Huss, came to the window of the room in which Jerome stood, and exhorted him to stand fast by the truth. Jerome engaged to be faithful unto death. He was delivered over by the

Imprisoned. Archbishop of Riga to a guard, who led him in the dark into a tower, where he was bound to a stake with his hands, feet, and neck, so that he could scarcely move his head. For two days he lay with nothing to eat, and would have perished, but for the timely interposition of Peter of Mladenowic. For several months, spent in this gloomy dungeon, he had not heard of the martyrdom of his friend.

Recantation, 1415. His spirit was broken, and, panic-stricken, he recanted on the 23rd of September, 1415. It was not the intention of the council, after

this humiliation, to set him at liberty. They continued to harass him with private inquisitions, until, roused to new vigour and determination, he demanded a public trial, in which he might declare all his mind. This was not conceded at first. When brought up on the 23rd of May, his tormentors imposed certain restrictions; but on that day, and on the 26th of May, he defended himself from seven o'clock in the morning till one in the afternoon against all accusations, with the presence of mind, force of argument, brilliant wit, and ready memory of facts, that filled all with admiration.

The celebrated Florentine, Poggio Bracciolini, who was present at the trial as one of the apostolic secretaries, writing to Leonard Aretin, May 30th, 1416, says: "I confess I have never heard any one who, in defence of a criminal cause, approached nearer to that eloquence of the ancients which we constantly admire. Nothing could be more surprising than the beauty of his discourse, the force of his reasoning, the greatness of his courage, the boldness and intrepidity of his look and appearance, in reply to his adversaries. He laid open the causes of the hatred of the witnesses against him with so much appearance of truth, that he was very near bringing the assembly over to his side; and if it had not been an affair of religion, he certainly would have been acquitted, so much compassion did he excite in the audience."*

Jerome accepted the position of Huss, and expressed his willingness to suffer in the defence of

* Poggio, in Von der Hardt, t. iii. pp. 69—71.

the truth he had embraced. The Cardinal of Florence visited him in his cell, to persuade him to recant; but he remained firm, and was condemned by the council to the flames. “He walked *Martyrdom.* to execution with a cheerful countenance, and with a greater intrepidity than was ever displayed by any before. When he arrived at the place of execution he quitted his garments of his own accord, and, throwing himself on his knees, kissed the stake to which he was to be fastened. He was immediately bound, chained and naked as he was, with wet cords. Large pieces of wood were piled around him, intermixed with straw. The fire being kindled, he began a hymn, which he continued to sing, notwithstanding the flame and smoke. As the executioner was about to apply the fire to that part of the pile which was behind him, for fear he should see it, ‘Advance,’ said he to him, ‘and kindle the fire before me! If I had feared it I should not have come hither, as I could readily have avoided it.’ Thus died this man, whose merit cannot be sufficiently admired. I was a witness to the catastrophe, and I have considered all the circumstances of it. Whether there was knavery or obstinacy in the business I cannot tell, but never death was more philosophic.”

The death of Jerome was Christian, and more than philosophic. The letter of Poggio was written on the day of his martyrdom, but he omits particulars which we learn from another source. Addressing the assembled crowd in the German language, after he had sung a hymn, he said: “My beloved children, as I have sung, so, and no otherwise, do I believe.

But the cause for which I now die is this, that I could not agree with the council in affirming that Master Huss was justly condemned by them. For I had truly known him as a genuine preacher of the gospel of Jesus Christ." When the fire was kindled, he repeated the prayer in a loud voice: "Into thy hands, O God, I commit my spirit." Afterwards, amid the torture of the flames, he said, in the Bohemian language, "Lord God, have pity on me; forgive me my sins, *for Thou knowest I have sincerely loved thy truth.*"

His lips appeared amidst the flames as if moving in prayer, when his voice could no longer be heard.

The course of events in Bohemia, after the death of Huss was, in many respects, disastrous. His countrymen felt that he had suffered the foulest wrong. Unhappily, the sentiment awakened by the tidings of his martyrdom took a vindictive form, and fanatical leaders arose to give to popular feeling the direction of open revolt. A meeting was held in Bethlehem Chapel, at Prague, to express the indignation of the people. Sixty nobles of Bohemia united in a protest (September 2nd, 1415), in which they say:—

"We protest, by these presents, with the heart as well as by the lips, that Master John Huss was a man very honest, just, and catholic; that for many years he conversed among us with a godliness void of offence. That during all the time he explained to us and our subjects, the gospel and the books of the Old and New Testaments, according to the exposition of the holy doctors approved by the Church, and that he has left writings behind him, wherein he constantly abhors all heresy, as he taught us to detest them, *exhorting us, at the same time, without ceasing, to peace and charity, and persuading us to it by both his discourses*

and example, so that we cannot find, after all the inquiry we have made, that the said Master John Huss ever taught or preached any error or heresy whatsoever, or that he offended any of us, or our subjects, in word or deed. On the contrary, he has lived with piety and good nature, exhorting all mankind to the observation of the gospel, and of the maxims of the holy fathers, for the edification of Holy Mother Church and our neighbours." They protest in similar terms, against the martyrdom of Jerome of Prague, and repudiate for themselves in the most indignant terms, the charge of heresy, and close with the declaration: "Notwithstanding all that hath passed, we are resolved to sacrifice our lives for the defence of the law of Jesus Christ, and of his faithful preachers, who declare it with zeal, humility, and constancy, without being shaken by all human constitutions that shall oppose this resolution."*

The council summoned the Bohemians to come to Constance, but they refused, though safe-conducts were sent for their protection. Twenty-

Bohemians
summoned.
to Con-
stance.

four articles were in consequence adopted, February 19th, 1418, against the Hussites.

Amongst them were the following:—

"That the King of Bohemia shall swear to maintain the Romish Church, and the other churches of his kingdom in their liberties, and not

Articles
against the
Hussites.

suffer them to be molested by the Hussites; that every person, clergyman or layman, who adheres to the doctrine of Wycliffe and John Huss, shall be compelled to abjure it, and punished according to law in case of refusal and disobedience; that the university of Prague shall be reformed and entirely purged of the Wycliffites; that the chief broachers of heresies shall be summoned to the court of Rome. Amongst others, the names of some are given, viz., John Jessenitz,

* Lenfant, i. 507, 508; Von der Hardt, t. iv. 495–497.

James de Misa, Simon de Tisna, Simon de Rokizane, Christian de Brochatitz, John Cardinal, Zdenko de Loben, Zdislaus de Sniertitz, and Michael de Kzisko. That all the laity, who have received the communion in both kinds, and obliged others to do so too, especially since the prohibition of the council, shall abjure this error; that Wycliffe's books, translated by John Huss or by Jacobel, into the vulgar tongue, shall be delivered to the legate or ordinary, as well as the treatise of John Huss, which was condemned in the council; that all Jacobel's tracts, wherein he declares in favour of the communion in both kinds, and treats the Pope as Antichrist, shall be burnt, together with his treatise wherein he maintains that bread remaineth upon the altar after consecration."*

Stringent methods were adopted for the suppression of the opinions of Wycliffe and Huss. The council decreed that relapsed persons should be burnt. The new Pope, Martin V., issued his injunctions on the subject to all bishops and inquisitors, in what part of the world soever.†

Suspected persons were required to answer certain interrogatories; as the following: "Whether he did know and converse with John Wycliffe, John Huss, and Jerome of Prague, and how he became acquainted with them? Whether he did not carry on the same correspondence with them as ever, after he knew that they were excommunicated? Whether he approves the sentence which the council passed against John Huss and Jerome of Prague, as well

* Lenfant, ii. 231; Von der Hardt, t. iv. p. 1517.

† Von der Hardt, t. iv. p. 1518.

as against their doctrine and books? Whether he has in his custody any books, works, letters, or tracts of those arch-heretics or their disciples; and whether he will swear to deliver them up to his bishop, and to discover those that have any?"

The flames of civil war were enkindled in Bohemia, and continued to rage for thirteen years. We

Civil war. gather little, from the story of the conflict, of the actual religious condition of the people who had adopted the views of Huss; but from the hand of an enemy we have a picture from which we may learn some of their characteristics. "Heretics," he says, "are grave and modest in all things. They avoid luxury and vanity in their habit. They follow no traffic, because it is attended with so much lying, swearing, and cheating; and they live by the labour of their hands. Their chief disciples are shoemakers, weavers, and tailors, who vent their opinions at the corner of streets. They are content with simple necessities, and lay up no treasures. They are commonly chaste and temperate, and visit no taverns nor other places of pleasure and vanity. They are always employed, either in their work, or else in learning or in teaching. They pay no regard to canonical hours, because they say that a paternoster or two repeated with devotion is better than tedious hours spent without devotion. They despise and set at nought the Church of Rome."

Among the signs that indicate a tendency to heresy, he mentions the following: "They who say that the Pope is Antichrist, and that he seduces Christian people; that the constitutions and customs

of the Pope were only invented for the sake of lucre, as well as the decrees and decretals; that general councils are conspiracies of men; that the prayers, alms of the Church, and masses for the dead are of no use; that there must be no images in the Church, to avoid idolatry; that the ornaments of the Church, the alb, the chasuble, and the curtains, were only invented for pomp, and that the apostles knew no such thing; that indulgences are for no use but to get money; that Jesus Christ has commanded the laity to communicate in both kinds; that the laity may explain the gospels and the Holy Scriptures, and preach at the corner of streets or in other places; that the life and sufferings of the saints must not be explained in sermons, because there is a great number of false stories in the legends; that it is wrong to found monasteries; that the tenths are mere alms." He tells us, "They are well-behaved in appearance, speak little and humbly, and that they are generally pale." *

Out of the fierce tempest of opinions and parties in Bohemia, there arose a Christian community opposed on principle to the use of the sword. Their settlements were in those districts where the Germanic and Slavonic elements are intermingled; and their emissaries went forth and traversed the wide domain of either language, seeking those already allied to them in opinion, or endeavouring to gain over new proselytes.† The origin of this religious sect we learn from their historian, Bohemian Brethren, 1453. Cranz. He tells us that "About the year 1453, some families of the citizens of Prague,

* Rainer. Von der Hardt, t. iii. pp. 664—670.

† Ranke.

and also gentry and learned men of this and other places, repaired to the lordship of Lititz, and made use of the ministry of some of the Calixtine ministers in whom they reposed confidence, especially Michael Bradazius, minister of the town of Zamberg. These abolished many superfluous ceremonies, and restored the decayed Church discipline—not suffering any one to receive the Holy Communion who had not first undergone their examination, and had been declared fit for it. Of this they were accused by the neighbouring ministers before the consistory, who forbade them to preach and administer the Holy Communion, and placed others in their room. The Brethren, being condemned by these ministers in all their sermons, absented themselves from the churches, made their remonstrance to Rokyzan and his suffragan, Lapacius, and begged for an examination. The former sent them away as they came; but the latter advised them to edify each

Advised to
choose their
own minis-
ters.

other in stillness, *to choose their ministers from among themselves, and to introduce good discipline and order.* The same advice they received from other well-disposed ministers of the Calixtines, who, on that very account, were forced to incur some share of the Brethren's reproach and persecution. They followed this advice, and took Michael Bradazius, who repaired to them at Runewald, for their minister. He, with his assistants in other villages, under the direction of Gregory, met in 1447 in a conference; in which, according to the light they then had, they formed their church fellowship among themselves, upon the rules and laws of Christ.

Hence in the beginning they denominated themselves "Fratres Legis Christi," Brethren of the Law of Christ. But as this gave occasion to less intelligent persons to look upon them as some new monastic order, they, dropping this name, styled themselves simply "Fratres," or Brethren; and, being afterwards joined by many other brethren of like disposition with themselves in Bohemia, "Unitas Fratrum," the Unity of the Brethren, or "Fratres Unitatis," the United Brethren; and, at the same time bound themselves to a stricter church discipline, resolved to suffer all things for conscience' sake; and instead of defending themselves, as the so-called Hussites had done, by force of arms, to defend themselves by prayer and reasonable remonstrances against the rage of their enemies."* Small companies of Brethren sprang up everywhere in Bohemia and Moravia, and joined them. They were stigmatized, both by Calixtine and Romish priests, not only as heretics, but as secret sowers of sedition.

Persecution arose in 1458. The Brethren were declared unworthy of the common rights of subjects, and in the depth of winter, turned out of the cities and villages, with the forfeiture of all their effects. The sick were cast into the open fields, where many perished with hunger and cold. They threw them into prisons with a view to extort from them, by hunger, cold, racks, and tortures, a confession of seditious crimes; and when nothing could be extorted from them, they were maimed in hands and feet, dragged inhumanly

* Cranz, Hist. of the Brethren, p. 23.

at the tails of horses or carts, and quartered or burnt alive. Many died in prison. The consistory issued a command that the Lord's Supper should be administered only with the ceremonies of the Calixtines, and especially not to the Picards (the Brethren), on pain of death.

The Brethren, in Lititz, during this persecution, sent messengers to strengthen the persecuted in the faith. Disappointed in obtaining relief from the king, who ordered them to be sought after and driven out of the country, they were obliged to conceal themselves in mountains and woods; and after they had given up all hopes of a thorough reformation, they resolved upon settling a Christian church discipline among themselves, and providing faithful ministers and overseers. Anxious, as to the appointment of ministers, they had recourse to the lot. They discussed the question, whether an ordination made by a presbyter, without a bishop, was valid, and came to the conclusion, that

Appoint-
ment of
ministers.

according to the example of the apostles, there was no difference between the elders or presbyters; but in Jerome's opinion, the divisions arising from the presbyters, attaching themselves to him who ordained them more than to the rest, gave rise to a unanimous determination of placing one presbyter over all the rest, in order to prevent an attachment to one or another, from whence parties might arise, consequently that they could be satisfied with ministers who were only ordained by presbyters. However, to put it out of their adversaries power to dispute the validity of their office, they determined to obtain an episcopal ordina-

tion.* As the Waldenses (on no certain grounds) trace the succession of their bishops from the apostolic times, they sent three priests already ordained into Austria, to a Waldensian bishop, who ordained them. On their return they ordained bishops, co-bishops, conseniors and presbyters, *ad libitum*. No sooner was the rumour spread abroad that the Brethren had obtained their own ministry by episcopal ordination, than persecution was renewed. A sanguinary edict was issued against them Edict of the Diet, 1468. by the Diet, 1468, and ordered to be read from all the pulpits; wherein they were declared outlaws, and an injunction laid upon the states of each district, to take them up and punish them at their own discretion. Their first bishop, Michael, was put in prison, and kept there until the death of the king. The yet surviving Brethren saw themselves under the necessity of keeping close, retreating into the thickest woods, and to escape detection, of hiding by day in the holes and clefts of the rocks. To prevent their being discovered by the smoke, they made no fire but by night, at which they read their Bibles and prayed. When compelled to leave their places of concealment, in a heavy fall of snow in quest of support, they Worship in places of concealment. went out in single file, the last dragging a bush after him, in order to fill up and hide the track. At the death of King Polliciebrad, in 1471, they had respite from persecution, and found favour and protection from patrons of distinction. They had the Bible translated into the Bohemian tongue, and printed at Venice, Four deputies were

* Cranz, part ii. sec, 12.

sent by them with a passport from the king, to examine into the state of Christendom, "in order to see if there were any where a living church to be met with free from errors and superstitions, and regulated according to Christ's plan and rule, with which they might unite? The co-bishop, Lucas, went into Greece and Dalmatia; Maurus Kokowetz into Moscovia, Scythia, and other Slavonian countries; Martin Kabatnick into Palestine and Egypt; and Caspar Marchius to Constantinople and into Thrace. These being returned, and having nowhere found what they sought, they, in the same view sent, in 1489,

1489. the co-bishop Lucas, and Thomas Germanius to Rome, and into Italy and France. These, it is true, met with many souls sighing in stillness, especially Waldenses, and saw several burnt alive for the truth, but found nowhere a congregation with which they could join to avoid all appearance of a schism. They therefore formed at a synod the well-known conclusion: "That if God should, anywhere in the world awaken genuine ministers and reformers of the Church, they would make a common cause with them."*

The Brethren might have learnt more if they had stayed at home, and looked with more diligence and humility into the New Testament. They were very near the truth when they saw, at the first examination of the inspired record, that bishops and presbyters were the same. A little more attention would have taught them that nothing more was

* Cranz.

required, than that each church or congregation of confessed believers should choose its own bishop to take the oversight of them in the name of the Lord. The divine plan from its simplicity did not meet their eye. They were expecting something more imposing, and, besides, they had a superstitious dread of "schism," not considering that true unity is alone to be found in Christ.

The sketch just given of the vicissitudes of the Bohemian Brethren, or of their general affairs, represents only imperfectly their spiritual condition. This we learn more certainly from the pervading spirit of their hymns. Amidst all their wanderings in quest of shelter, and the privations they endured, like the prisoners at midnight in the prison at Philippi, they "sang praises to God." As we listen to the plaintive strain, or to the jubilant note of triumph, that has been repeated for centuries, we can understand what must have been the strength of the faith by which they endured the trials and afflictions of their course, and the indissoluble bond of pure and fervent love that kept them together. At the break of day they sang, in their places of shelter amongst the rocks or in the forest, the hymn, "Es geht daher des Tages schein," of which Catherine Winkworth has given us the following translation :—

Spiritual
condition.

Hymns
of the
Brethren

"Once more the daylight shines abroad;
O Brethren, let us praise the Lord,
Whose grace and mercy thus have kept
The nightly watch while we have slept.

“To Him let us together pray
With all our heart and soul to-day,
That He would keep us in his love,
And all our guilt and sin remove.

“Eternal God ! Almighty Friend !
Whose deep compassions have no end,
Whose never-failing strength and might
Have kept us safely through the night—

“Now send us from thy heavenly throne
Thy grace and help, through Christ, thy Son,
That with thy strength our hearts may glow,
And fear not man nor ghostly foe.

“Ah, Lord God ! hear us, we implore !
Be Thou our guardian evermore ;
Our mighty champion, and our shield,
That goeth with us to the field.

“We offer up ourselves to Thee,
That heart, and word, and deed may be
In all things guided by thy mind,
And in Thine eyes acceptance find.

“Thus, Lord, we bring through Christ, thy Son,
Our morning offering to thy throne.
Now be thy precious gift outpoured,
And help us for Thine honour, Lord.”*

At nightfall, when they sought repose in their lowly dwellings, they raised the evening song, “Die nacht est kommen danu wir ruhen” :—

“The night is come, wherein at last we rest.
God order this, and all things, for the best !
Beneath his blessing fearless we may lie,
Since He is nigh.

“Drive evil thoughts and spirits far away ;
Master, watch o’er us till the dawning day ;
Body and soul alike from harm defend ;
Thine angel send.” Etc., etc.

* *Lyra Germanica*, Second Series, 69, 77.

CHAPTER VII.

A SPIRITUAL famine was felt throughout Europe at the period now under review. Men began in different places simultaneously to deplore the evils existing around them, and to sigh for a better state of things.

Spiritual
famine.

JOHN OF WESSEL was a man of this spirit. He was a native of Over-Wesel (the Vesalia of the Romans), one of the most lovely spots on the banks of the Rhine, between Mayence and Coblenz, and not far from St. Goar. He is known as Joannes de Vesalia, or simply WESSALIA.*

John of
Wessel.

In a sermon preached by him at Worms, he said, "I scorn the Pope, the Church, and councils, and I extol Christ. Let his Word dwell in us richly."

During his residence in the city just mentioned, he wrote a treatise "On the Authority, Office, and Power of the Pastors of Churches," in which he says :—

"The Church has lapsed so far from true piety into a certain kind of Jewish superstition, that wherever we turn our eyes, we see nothing but an empty and ostentatious display of works, void of the least spark of faith, the Pharisaic pride of the Rabbis, cold ceremonies, and vain superstition—not to call it idolatry. All seem

Treatise on
the condi-
tion of the
Church.

* Ullman, i. 288.

intent on reaping a golden harvest, pursue only their own interest, and totally neglect the duties of Christian piety."

"It is certainly," he adds, "a hard task to be one of the princes and rulers of the people, for they have to answer, not merely for their own sins, but also for the errors of others; and, if men would reflect upon this, they would never canvas for the office of a ruler and pastor, nor pursue or purchase it with gold, but would wait the call of the Lord. For they who obtain this dignity without vocation are, according to the language of our Saviour, thieves and robbers, having entered it by another way, and not by the door of Christ. The preachers of eternal wisdom ought to be the 'salt of the earth.'

"But if the salt have lost its savour, wherewith shall it be salted? It is thenceforth good for nothing but to be cast out and to be trodden under foot of men.' The meaning of which is, if the doctrine of the priests and prelates be not the genuine doctrine of Christ, it ought to be rejected and trampled in the dust: so little is it our duty to listen to pastors who would fain sprinkle and season us with salt that has lost its virtue.

"Rare as a black swan is the priest who discharges the apostolical office with apostolical fidelity; and the reason is, because *the Word of the Lord is fettered by human devices, and cannot be freely preached.*

"Tyranny and oppression on every side cry out against it, and the ordinances of many bishops are opposed—not to speak of the legends of the saints, the imposture of indulgences, the labours of fraternities, which one must in every way extol to the skies, in order to enjoy favour, and escape the chance of losing our stipulated pay. 'Speak to us what we like to hear,' say the people in their folly, 'or we will call down the wrath of God upon your head.' The consequence is, that (as good pastors either hide in a corner or are proscribed and shamefully banished) the great majority discharge their office with no other view but to feed themselves and not the sheep, and seek to promote their own interests instead of nourishing them. Nay, sometimes, not satisfied with their wool and milk, they flay and wholly devour them. How extreme is the misery of the Christian flock! The little ones call for bread, and there is no one to give it them. They seek for water, and there is none; and their tongue faileth for thirst."

"The Redeemer," he says, "promises the glory of the apostolic name to those who shall abide in his Word. He whom God hath sent must preach God's Word; whereas he whose preaching does not agree with the Word of the Father, is excluded from His discipline. It is clear that He only who teaches the Word of the Lord is a true apostle and pastor. Whosoever delivers a contrary doctrine is not to be believed. Whoever teaches that Christ has been made unto us for righteousness, the same is a teacher whom the Lord has given."

The great body of teachers in the Romish Church were not of this order; and, feeling the heaviest burden upon his spirit on this account, John of Wessel exclaims: "*Come it will: our souls will perish with hunger, unless from on high some star of mercy rise and dispel the darkness, and clear our eyes from the delusions with which they are bewitched by the falsehoods of our rulers, and restore the light, and at last, after so many years, break the yoke of our Babylonish captivity. Deliver, O God! thy people from all their tribulations.*"

This faithful witness for the truth died in prison in 1482, as it appears, for holding inter-
course with the Hussites.* JOHN WESSEL

Died in
prison,
1482.

(surnamed Basilius, and also Gansfort),
born at Groningen (in the most northern part of
Holland), 1420, was more distinguished as

John Wes-
sel, 1420.

a theologian and a scholar than Wessalia. After studying and lecturing in the universities of Heidelberg, Paris, Rome, and elsewhere, he grew dissatisfied with the scholastic theology, and took refuge in a fervent mysticism. It is said that, in an interview with Pope Sixtus IV., his Holiness offered to grant him any request he should make, in the

* Brown's Fasic, i. 325.

anticipation that he would ask for some Church preferment. Much to the surprise of the Pope, Wessel said, "I beg you will give me out of the Vatican library a Greek and a Hebrew Bible."

"You shall have them," replied Sixtus; "but, foolish man, why do you not ask for a bishopric, or something of that sort?"

"For the best of reasons," said Wessel; "because I do not want such things."

In many theological points Wessel anticipated the conclusions of the Saxon reformers. "*Every individual,*" he said, "*must exercise his*

Anticipates
views of
Saxon
reformers.

own judgment. He is under obligation to believe in God, and in his Word—in the latter of which he must search. Never

ought he to follow the decision even of a numerous crowd, *contrary to his conviction, and so long as it appears to him to contradict the Scripture.* But whilst pursuing this course, he ought to be always ready to believe, when convinced of an opinion sounder than his own." "We have cause to complain that in many things the visible Church does err."

"The pastor is appointed to feed the flock of God; but *inasmuch as the flock to be fed are possessed of reason and free will, they are not committed wholly to the power of the pastor, as if nothing were required of them but obedience to him.* The sheep ought itself to know both with what it is nourished and with what it is infected, and how it can avoid the pernicious infection, even when offered to it by the pastor: and if, in such a case, it follows the pastor, it is without excuse. The duty of the people, accordingly, is to follow their pastor to the pasture.

If, however, he does not feed them, he is no pastor, and in that case, as he acts contrary to his duty, the flock are not under obligation to obey." Beyond, therefore, the duty of the individual to "try the spirits" and "to prove all things," he enjoins the Church to remember and to act upon its collective responsibility. To fulfil the duties inculcated by Wessel, the Church must be formed on voluntary profession, independent of external control—in a word, Congregational in its order. We have, then, another indication of the tendency in the undergrowth of conviction to the primitive model.

Luther, at a subsequent period, gave great attention to the writings of Wessel. In the Leipsic Edition of 1522, Luther wrote a Preface in which he says, "I am told that

Interest of
Luther in
his writ-
ings, 1522.

even in these days *there is a secret remnant of the people of God*. Nay, I am not only told so, but I rejoice to see a proof of it. Here is a new publication, by Wessel, of Groningen, a man of an admirable genius, and of an uncommonly enlarged mind. It is very plain that he was taught of God as Isaiah prophesied that Christians should be. And as in my own case, so with him—it cannot be supposed that he received his doctrines from men. If I had read his works before, my enemies might have supposed that I had learnt everything from Wessel, such a perfect coincidence there is in our opinions. As to myself, I not only derive pleasure, but strength and courage from this publication. I am surprised that this excellent Christian writer should be so little known." *

* Milner. Luther, Ep. ii. p. 89 ; Ap. Lect. i. s. 133, p. 226.

Wessel died in peace at Groningen in 1489, protected from the Inquisition by the Bishop of Utrecht.

The work begun by Wycliffe in England had a more favourable issue than the Bohemian movement.

Lollards,
followers
of Wycliffe
in England. It was not marred, as in the case of the Hussites, with military conflict. Wycliffe had taken his full share in public affairs, and at one time his patron, John of Gaunt, afforded to him strong protection; but, in obedience to his Divine Leader, he advanced to the position in which he was denuded of all worldly support. He entered, therefore, into no political combinations for the furtherance of the gospel.

“Go and preach,” he said to the instructed and zealous men about him; “it is the sublimest work; Counsel to
preachers. but imitate not the priests, whom we see after sermon sitting in the alehouses, or at the gaming-table, or wasting their time in hunting. After your sermon is ended, visit the sick, the aged, the lame, and succour them according to your ability. The highest service to which man can attain on earth is to preach the Word of God.”

To inspire the ardour of these humble evangelists Wycliffe pointed them to the example of the Prince of Preachers. “Jesus,” he told them, “did indeed the lessons He taught. The Gospel relates how He went about in the places of the country, both great and small; in cities and castles, or in the small towns; and this that He might teach us how to become profitable to men generally, and not to forbear to preach to the people because they are few, and our name may not in consequence be great. For

we should labour for God, and from Him hope for our reward. There is no doubt that Christ went into such small uplandish towns as Bethphage and Cana in Galilee, for Christ went to all those places where He wished to do good. He laboured not for gain. He was not smitten with either pride or covetousness." *

These admirable counsels of the "Evangelical Doctor" were accompanied with his earnest prayer: "Almighty Lord God, merciful and infinite in knowledge, since Thou sufferest Peter and all the apostles to have so great dread, and in the time of thy passion, that they all fled away through fear of death, and for a poor woman's voice; and afterwards, by the comfort of the Holy Ghost, Thou madest them so strong that they were afraid of no man, nor of pain, nor of death; help now, by gifts of the Son and Holy Ghost, thy poor servants, who all their life have been cowards, and make them strong and bold in thy cause, and maintain the gospel against Antichrist and against all the tyrants of the world."

The "good seed" sown by Wycliffe's preachers with an unsparing hand began to germinate in many places. "The number of those who believed," we are told by Knighton, "were multiplied, and filled the compass of the kingdom. So far had they prevailed, that they got over to their sect] *the greater part of the kingdom.*" This admission is remarkable, though it may not be free from exaggeration. A mere popular excitement would have soon subsided. But in the midst of the

* Tracts and Treatises, p. 85.

general mass who more or less favoured evangelical doctrines, there was an inner circle of devout enquirers. "They all had one manner of speech, or the same way of walking, and wonderfully agreed in opinion." Their union of sentiment was the result of a deeper "fellowship in the spirit." They formed themselves spontaneously into Christian associations for mutual instruction and united worship. The order of their assemblies must of necessity have been perfectly simple, for there was no room in their private "conventicles" for the gradations of ecclesiastical rank. Wycliffe had taught them that "the temple of man is built of stones of fair composition, but the temple of God is the *congregation of men living religiously*." "The fairness," he says, "in which He delighteth is not that of shining marbles, but of the Christian graces." "Christian men," he said, "*taught of God's law, call holy Church the congregation of just men for whom Jesus shed his blood, and they do not so call stones, and timbers, and earthly rubbish, which Antichrist's clerks value more than God's righteousness and the souls of Christian men.*" *

The Church
a congrega-
tion of
Christian
believers.

The followers of Wycliffe adopted his views on Church polity. The direction of their leader not to neglect the "uplandish towns and villages," was one of great practical wisdom. The means of reaching remote parts of the country at that period were rare, and travelling, in consequence, difficult, and attended with considerable danger. The agents of the Government, though extremely vigilant, were not ubiquitous; and on the borders of Wales in par-

* Tracts and Treatises, p. 32.

ticular, it was comparatively easy to elude their search. In many a sylvan retreat or secluded glen the "Gospellers" met to conduct their simple worship. The order of their service is unknown to us, and we have no register of their names. We meet only with incidental notices like the following: "A congregation met in 1390, in a cottage in a desert wood, called 'Derwall's Wood,' in the diocese of Hereford." Another "conventicle" was held in a chapel of Newton, "near the town of Leutwarden." Of their principles we have more distinct information. At a time of tumult and insurrection, they were eminently pacific, though remarkable for moral courage. The Lollard preachers did not conceal their opinions. WILLIAM SWINDERBY, when forbidden to preach in any church or churchyard, made a pulpit of two millstones in the High Street of Leicester in 1391, where a large concourse of people from the town and neighbourhood flocked to hear him. WALTER BRUTE, one of his friends, who expressed approval of his opinions, was brought up before the prelates and abbots of the Royal Commission, on the 3rd of October, 1393, and was examined on three successive days. In common with his brethren, he strongly protested against any appeal to the sword. "It is manifest," he says, "that the New Testament is of greater perfection than the former. We must fight more perfectly than in the time of the Old Testament—now spiritually, then corporally; now for an everlasting inheritance, then for an earthly and temporal; now by patience, then by resistance."

Secret con-
gregations,
1390.

Swinderby
1391.

Walter
Brute.

Examina-
tion, 1393.

In the course of a lengthened examination, Walter Brute raised a powerful argument against the Papacy, founded on the character and offices of the Redeemer. He contended that infallibility was to be found in Christ alone. "*His doctrine,*" he said, "*must be observed above all other doctrines, whether they be of angels or of men, because that He could not and would not err in his teaching.*" "If the high Bishop of Rome do make and maintain any laws contrary to the gospel of Jesus Christ, then is he of those that come in Christ's name, saying, 'I am of Christ,' and have seduced many according to the testimony of our Saviour (Matthew xxi. 24)."
"*If the city of Rome do allow his testimony, and do disallow Christ's holy commandments and Christ's doctrine that it may confirm traditions, then is she Babylon the great, or the daughter of Babylon.*"

The intrepidity of this confessor of the fourteenth century was blended with a spirit of becoming meekness. "It is not in my mind," he said to his ecclesiastical judges, "through God's grace to refuse known truth for any reward, greater or smaller; nor yet from the fear of any temporal punishment. Even so it is not in my mind to maintain any erroneous doctrine for the sake of any advantage; and if any man, of what state, sect, or condition soever he be, will shew that I err in my writings or sayings, by the authority of the sacred Scriptures, or by probable reason grounded on the sacred Scriptures, I will humbly and gladly receive his information. But as for the bare words of any teacher (Christ only excepted), I will not simply believe, except he shall be able

to establish them by the truth of experience or of Scripture." He showed, moreover, that even the apostles, when left to their own judgment, had erred—as when Paul rebuked Peter; and that the teachers of one age were contradicted by the doctors of another age; and that truth, according to man's opinion, at one time was condemned as heresy afterwards.

Much followed to the same effect, until the session was closed; and the inflexible Lollard was conducted, on Monday, October 6th, 1393, into the churchyard, and made to ascend the cross and do homage to his diocesan.

Scene in
the church-
yard, 1393.

Several barons and knights in armour, clergymen in the robes of different orders, with a great multitude of people, gathered round to witness the expected act of humiliation. Walter Brute mounted the rustic steps, and read a form of submission from a scroll, with the reservation that he should render allegiance "principally to the Evangel of Jesus Christ."

From the statements made by him on the occasion, the Commissioners found no less than thirty-seven articles deemed by them heretical, which were sent accordingly, for formal condemnation, to the doctors of Oxford.

The good man escaped in the interval with his friend Swinderby to the borders of the Principality, and the authorities proclaimed them as outlaws, and enjoined the people to prevent them from reaching their "accustomed starting-holes."

The condition of Hereford caused great uneasiness to Boniface IX., who now held the Papal See

He wrote to the bishop on the 15th of October, 1395, in terms of severe remonstrance; and on the same day he addressed a missive to the King (Richard II.) equally vehement and peremptory. "It grieveth us," writes the Pontiff, "from the bottom of our hearts, and our Holy Mother throughout Christendom lamenteth." "The sting of the greatest sorrow doth penetrate us," he continues, "that in our time this hair-brained sect should have been suffered, in your kingdom, to grow and increase." "Stand up, in the power of God, against this pestilent and contagious sect, and lively persecute the same in form of law." "Banish, expel, and imprison them." "Let not one spark of this firebrand (burning and flaming ever sore) remain hid under ashes, but that it be utterly extinguished." *

The uneasiness of the Pope, 1395.

These mandates had their intended effect on some who were not prepared to meet the ordeal. We have an example of this defection in William Dynot, who took the following oath of submission, September 1st, 1396:—

Submission of Dynot.

"I, Wyllyam Dynot, of Nottingham, before yow, worshipfull fader and Lord Archbishop of Yhork, and your clergie, with my fre will and full avysed, swere to God and to all his seyntes upon this holy gospell, that fro this day forthward, I shall worship ymages, with praying and offeryng unto them in the worship of the seyntes, that they be made after; and also I shall never more despise pylgremage, ne states of Holy Chirche in no degre, and also I shall be buxum to the lawes of Holy Church, and to yhowe, as to myn archbishop, and to myn other ordinaries and curates, and kepe ye lawes upon my power, and meyntein them: and also I shall never more meyntein, ne techen, ne defend errours, conclusions, no teching of the Lollards,

* Foxe.

ne swych conclusions and techings that men clopeth Lollards doctrine. Ne I shall her books ne hem, or ony suspect or diffamed of Lollardery receyve or company withall wytinglye, or defend in the maters : and I knowe ony swych, I shall, withall the haste that I may do, yhowe or else your officers to wyten, etc., of ther bokes ; and also I shall excyte and stirre all tho to good doctrine that I have hindred with myn doctryne up my power : and also I shall stand to your declaration which is heresy or errour, and do thereafter, and also what penance ye woll, for that I have don for maynteyning of this fals doctryne enjoyne me, I shall fulfill it, and I submit me thereto up to my power : and also I shall make no other glose of this myn othe but as the words stonde : and if it be so that I com again or do agayn this othe, or ony party thereof, I yelde me here cowpable as an heretike, and to be punyshed by the lawe as an heretike, and to forfeit all my godes to the king's will withouten any other processe of lawe : and therto I require the notarie to make of all this, the which is my will an instrument against me."*

There may be some doubt as to the "free will" of William Dynot, but his declaration is interesting as exhibiting the exact state of mind to which the court of Rome desired to bring the people of England.

For a time persecution was stayed by the gentle influence of "the good Queen Anne," sister to the King of Bohemia. At the death of the queen, and the deposition of the king, 1399. September 30th, 1399, the prelates gained ascendancy. Schools were ordered to be instantly closed, and the copying of books or any portion of writing containing the opinions of Wycliffe were to be destroyed.

Within a few months after the promulgation of this cruel edict, the fires of Smithfield were lighted, and WILLIAM SAWTREE was burnt on the 26th of February, 1401. In the decree issued

Sawtree
burnt, 1401.

* Ex. Rol. Claus. 19. R. ii.; Wilkin's Concilia, vol. iii. p. 225.

on the occasion, Henry IV. avows his purpose to destroy the newly sprung-up heretic "and to defend the Church."

"We, therefore," he says, "as zealous of religion, and a lover of the Catholic faith, being desirous

Statute de
Heretico
Combun-
rendo.

to maintain and defend the Holy Church, and the rights and liberties of the same, and, as far as in us lieth, to pluck up by the roots such heresies and errors of our realm of England, and with condign correction to punish all heretics, or such as being convict; seeing that such heretics, convict and condemned in form aforesaid, ought, both according to Divine and human law, and the canonical institutions in this belief accustomed, to be burned with fire; do command you as strictly as we can, firmly enjoining you that you cause the aforesaid William, being in your custody, in some public and open space within the city aforesaid (being published unto the people), to be committed to the fire, and him in the same fire really to be burned, for detestation of his crime, and

the manifest example of other Christians.

1401. And hereof ye are not to fail that will fall thereupon. Feste Rege Apud Westm. 26 Feb., an. regni sui 2nd. (A.D. 1401.)"

Arundel, the primate, at whose instigation these barbarous proceedings were adopted, resided during the summer months at the Castle of Saltwood, near

1407. Hythe, an ancient and well-fortified baronial hall. In 1407 this archiepiscopal fortress stood in its massive strength, recently restored by Courtenay, its former occupant. A deep moat, with a drawbridge and portcullis, guarded the

entrance. Two towers flanked the gateway. We find here on "Lammas Sunday" a company of Lollards standing together in the "great chamber," waiting to be called before the Primate, who is also Chancellor of England, and sits to receive them in his closet, attended by the "parson of St. Dunstan's in London," and two legal advisers. WILLIAM THORPE is under examination:—

William
Thorpe's
examina-
tion.

ARCHBISHOP. "William, I know well that thou hast, this twenty winters and more, travelled about busily in the north country, and in other parts of England, sowing false doctrines; having great business if thou might with thine untrue teaching and shrewd will for to infect and poison this land. But through the grace of God thou art now withstanded and brought unto my ward, so that I shall now sequester thee from thine evil purposes, and let [hinder] thee to envenom the sheep of my province. Saint Paul saith, 'If it may be, as much as in us lieth, we ought to have peace with all men.' Therefore, William, if thou wilt now meekly, and of good heart, and without any feigning, kneel down, and lay thine hand upon a book, and kiss it, promising faithfully, as I shall here charge thee, that thou wilt submit thee to my correction, and stand to mine ordinance, and fulfil it duly by all thy cunning and power, thou shalt yet find me gracious unto thee."

These bland words produce but little impression on "William." Instead of bending the knee, he is, if possible, more erect, and repeats a creed, *ex animo*, not pleasant for his Grace to hear. The archbishop, in reply, insinuates that the doctrines of the Lollards are not good in their practical influence.

"I gave," he says, "to John Purvey [the curate of Wycliffe] a benefice but a mile out of this castle, and I heard more complaints about his covetousness for tithes, and other misdoings, than I did for all men that were advanced within my diocese."

THORPE. "I see Purvey is neither with you now for the benefice that you gave him, nor holdeth he faithfully with the learning that he taught and writ beforetime, and that he showeth himself neither to be hot nor cold; and therefore he and his fellows may

sore dread, that if they turn not hastily to the way that they have forsaken, peradventure they be put out of the number of Christ's people."

ARCHBISHOP. "Though Purvey be now a false harlot" (a strange name for a curate), "I quit me now to him. But come he more for such cause before me (or we part), I shall know with whom he holdeth. But which are these holy men and wise, of whom thou hast taken these informations?"

THORPE. "Sir, Master John Wycliffe was holden of full many men the greatest clerk that they knew then living, and therewith he was named a passing holy man, and heretofore great men communed oft with him, and they loved so his learning that they writ it, and busily enforced themselves thereafter. Sir, this foresaid learning of Mr. John Wycliffe is yet holden of full many men and women the most agreeable learning unto the living and teaching of Christ and of his apostles, and most openly showing and declaring *how the Church of Christ hath been and yet should be ruled and governed*. Therefore so many men and women covet this learning, and purpose, through God's grace, to conform their living like to that way. Mr. JOHN ASHTON taught and writ accordingly and full busily where, and when, and to whom that he might, and he used it himself right perfectly unto his life's end. And also PHILIP of REPPINDON, while he was canon of Leicester, NICOLAS HEREFORD, DAVIE CORTRAIE, of Puckring, monk of Byland, and a Master of Divinity, and many others, were holden right wise men and prudent, and conformed them thereto; and with all these men I was right homely, and communed with them long time and oft; and so, before all other men, I chose willingly to be informed of them and by them, especially of Wycliffe himself, as of the most virtuous and godly wise man that I heard or knew, and therefore of him especially, and of these men I took the learning that I have taught, and purpose to live thereafter (if God will) to my life's end. For though some of those men be contrary to the learning that they taught before, I wot well that their learning was true that they taught; and therefore, with the help of God, I purpose to hold and use what I heard of them while they sat on Moses' chair, and especially while they sat on the chair of Christ. But after the works that they now do I will not do, with God's help; for they feign and hide, contrary to the truth which before they taught out plainly and truly. For as

I know, when some of these men have been blamed for their slanderous doing, they grant not that they have taught amiss or erred beforetime, but that they were constrained by pain to leave to tell out the truth; and this they choose now, rather to blaspheme God than to suffer awhile persecution bodily for that Christ shed out his blood for."

Thorpe will not follow their example of prevarication.

"If, sir," he says to the Archbishop, "either for pleasure of them that are neither so wise, nor of so virtuous conversation to my knowledge, nor by common fame to any other man's knowledge in this land, as those men were of whom I took my counsel and information, I should now forsake, thus suddenly and shortly, and unwarned, all the learning that I have exercised myself in these thirty winters. And more, my conscience should ever be herewith out of measure unquieted; and as, sir, I know well that many men and women should be thereby greatly troubled and slandered, for mine untruth and cowardice many a one should be put into full great reproof, many a one would curse me full bitterly; this I fear not; but the curse of God which I should deserve herein would bring me to a full and evil end; if I repented me any way returning into the way, all the bishops of the land would pursue me as a relapse, and they that now have (though I be unworthy) some confidence in me, hereafter would never trust to me, though I should teach and live never so virtuously more than I can or may."

ARCHBISHOP. "Lewd Lozell, either quickly consent thou to mine ordinance, and submit thee to stand to my decrees, or, by St. Thomas,* thou shalt be degraded, and follow thy fellow (Sawtree) into Smithfield."

The disciple of "thirty winters" remains silent and unmoved.

After his return to his companions from this scene in the castle, Thorpe said: "I thought in mine heart that God did to me great grace, if He would by his great mercy bring me to such an end; and in mine heart I was nothing afraid with the menacing of the archbishop; and I considered these two things in him, that he was not yet sorrowful for

* Thomas a Becket had lived in the castle.

that he had made William Sawtree to be burnt, and that he thirsted yet after more shedding out of innocent blood."

In this surmise Thorpe did no injustice to the archbishop. On Sunday the 1st of March, 1409,

1409.

in an assembly of bishops, assisted by Edmond, Duke of York, and the great officers of State, he condemned JOHN BADBY, a poor artisan, to be burnt for denying the doctrine of

John
Badby.

transubstantiation. To make sure of his victim, his Grace "put him in a certain chamber or safe house within the mansion of the preaching friars, and said he would himself keep the keys thereof until the day of execution, the 15th of the same month."

The Prince of Wales (afterwards Henry V.) attended to superintend the burning of the martyr.

Constitu-
tions of
Arundel,
1408.

The "Constitutions" of Arundel, framed in 1408, for the suppression of Wycliffe's opinions, remain as memorials of his anti-

Biblical zeal. In the preamble the archbishop lays down the principles on which they are

Basis of
Principles.

based: "He does an *injury*," he says, "*to the reverend synod, who examines its determinations*, since he who disputes the supreme earthly judgment is liable to the punishment of sacrilege, as the authority of the civil law teaches us; much more grievously are they to be punished and to be cut off as putrid members from the Church militant, who, leaning to their own wisdom, violate, oppose, and despise by various doctrines, words, and deeds, the laws and canons made by the King—keeper of eternal life and death—when they have been published according to form and canon." The primate

then proceeds to give the decrees in accordance with the doctrine thus laid down :—

“ We enjoin and require that no book or tract written by John Wycliffe or any other person either in Wycliffe’s time or since, or who in the future shall write upon a subject in divinity, shall be suffered to be read either in the schools, halls, or any other places within our province of Canterbury, unless such books shall be first examined by the University of Oxford or Cambridge, or at least by twelve such persons as shall be pitched upon for that purpose by both or one of the universities, according as our successors shall direct ; and after the examination and approbation of us, our successors, and the parties above mentioned, the said tracts shall be delivered to the stationers to be faithfully copied before they are sold, or otherwise disposed of, and the original be laid up and kept in the chest of the university. And if any person shall publicly read or maintain any book of this kind, not licensed in the manner above mentioned, let him be prosecuted that maketh it his business to spread the infection of schism and heresy.

“ It is a dangerous undertaking, as St. Jerome assures us, to translate the Holy Scriptures, it being very difficult to keep close to the sense of the inspired writers, for, by the confession of the same father, he had mistaken the meaning of several texts. We therefore decree and ordain that from henceforward no unauthorized person shall translate any part of the Holy Scripture into English, or any other language, under any form, or book, or treatise ; neither shall any such book or treatise, or version made either in Wycliffe’s time or since, be read, either in whole or in part, publicly or privately, under the penalty of the greater excommunication, till the said translation shall be approved either by the provincial council, as occasion shall require.”

The Lollards were not silenced by these ecclesiastical mandates. A treatise was published by them, “ showing that we ought to have the Scripture in England.” It was intended, the writer maintains, that all nations should have the Word of God in their own tongue.

"The four evangelists," he says, "wrote the gospel in divers languages, as Matthew in Jewry, Mark in Italy, Luke in Achaia, and John in Asia, and all these wrote in the languages of the same countries." The books of Daniel and of Esdras, he affirms, on the authority of Jerome, were written in Chaldee; the book of Joel in Arabic and Syriac; Ezekiel left his prophecy in the mother tongue of Babylon; Isaiah is translated into the tongue of Ethiopia.

Origen, with the help of others, translated the Bible out of Hebrew, A.D. 234. Aquila translated it in the time of Adrian the Emperor, A.D. 234. 124. Theodotius made a translation of it in the time of Emperor Commodus, fifty-four years after Aquila. Simacus translated it in the 124. time of Emperor Severus, thirty years after Theodotius. Eight years after Simacus, it was translated, the author unknown, in the time of Alexander the Emperor. Jerome translated it into Latin, and directed others to translate it into their own language. "Thus the Englishmen desire to have the law of God in English."

Those who forbid this "show themselves heirs and sons of the first tormentors, and worse; for they show themselves the very disciples of Antichrist.

"Now God of his mercy give unto our king and to our lords grace of true understanding to amend this default principally, and all other; then shall we more easily be amended. For until it be amended, there shall never be rest and peace to this realm."

The light of truth was steadily advancing, in the

midst of much that tended to obscure, and often for a time to eclipse. The measures adopted by the court of Rome to suppress the opinions of the Hussites and Lollards, rather served to keep them in remembrance and to stimulate inquiry.

The Pope in 1428 published a Bull, which he sent into England and other countries, commanding processions to be made on

Pope's Bull
against the
Bohemians
1428.

the first Sunday of every month in all churches and churchyards, in order to draw down the vengeance of heaven on those who favoured the heretical Bohemians, and promising sixty days' indulgence to all who attended these processions, or who said twenty-five paternosters with the same intention. A crusade, moreover, was proclaimed against the Bohemians, conducted by the Cardinal of Winchester, granting the pardon of all their sins and the happiness of heaven to all who died on that expedition, with a certain quantity of indulgences to all who contributed to its success, in proportion to the value of the contribution.* We can imagine nothing more effectual to advertise the matter.

* Wilkins, Conc. p. 492.

CHAPTER VIII.

At the northern extremity of the county of Kent, two miles from the Thames, and three miles from Rochester, there stood, at the beginning of the fifteenth century, a square mansion with embattled towers, called Cowling Castle. Sir John Oldcastle, the proprietor of this ancient domain (who held it in the right of his wife, the daughter of Lord Cobham), was a friend of the Wycliffites. The sentiments of the worthy knight on the subject of non-resistance, were not in accordance with those of the reformer of Lutterworth; but the poor evangelists who found shelter at the castle were glad to rest there in their journey, though the notions of their military friend were somewhat incongruous. "In knighthood," said their host, "the sword is borne by the law of office. Knights should see that the gospel be purely taught, conforming their lives to the same, and secluding all false preachers. They ought rather to hazard their lives than to suffer such wicked devices as either blemish the eternal testimony of God, or let (hinder) the free passage thereof. They ought also to preserve God's people from oppressions, tyrants, and thieves, and to see the clergy supported so long as

they teach plainly, pray rightly, and minister the sacraments freely ; and if they see them do otherwise, they are bound by law of office to compel them to change their doings, and to see all things performed according to God's prescript ordinances."

Arundel was greatly incensed at the conduct of Sir John Oldcastle (Lord Cobham), in lending support to the Lollards, and represented to Henry V. the dangers likely to arise from the principles and course of this "mighty maintainer of heresy."

The king sent for the chieftain, who in former years had been his companion in arms during the wars in France, and demanded an explanation, with immediate submission. "I am as I always have been," replied the knight, "most willing to obey your majesty as the minister of God, to bear the sword of justice for the punishment of evil-doers and the protection of them that do well. To you, therefore, next to my eternal Judge, I owe my whole obedience, and entirely submit, as I have ever done, to your pleasure my life and all my fortune in this world and in all affairs of it whatever, and am ready to perform exactly your royal commands. But as to the Pope and the spiritual dominion which he claims, I owe him no service that I know of, nor will I pay him any, for as sure as God's word is true, to me it is fully evident that he is the great Antichrist—the son of perdition—the open adversary of God ; and the "abomination in the holy place."

The king could not deal with fixed ideas of this kind, and referred the case to his ecclesiastical advisers. Lord Cobham was tried in September,

1413, at the Chapter-house of St. Paul's, convicted of "heresy," and sent to the Tower, under sentence of death. He escaped the same night, and for three years or more concealed himself in the borders of Wales, and in other places. Meanwhile, the bishops continued to work on the fears of the king. Messengers were sent to the palace at Eltham (a few miles from London), to report the assemblage of the Lollards in the fields near St. Giles's, headed by Lord Cobham. The royal army marched in the night, led by the king in person, to surprise the supposed insurgents. The achievement was attended with little or no loss on the part of the assailants. They found neither ensigns, flags, nor ammunition. Lord Cobham was not there, and in reply to inquiries respecting their leader, the alarmed "Gospellers" said "they wanted Beverley, their preacher." Twenty persons were killed, and Beverley, with thirty-six other prisoners, were taken, and at the king's leisure put to death in cold blood. Ultimately, Lord Cobham was taken prisoner, and at the suggestion of his episcopal judges, he was hung in chains, and slowly consumed to ashes.

It was well for the purity and simplicity of their cause, that the Lollards were not more completely identified with the powerful families brought subsequently into violent collision in the Wars of the Roses. The son of John of Gaunt, the early patron of Wycliffe, claimed the throne as the representative of the House of Lancaster, and the son of Lady Cobham contended for it as the head of the Yorkists. An intimate and formal alliance with either party

would have been fatal to the followers of Wycliffe as a religious body. Their pacific principles alone preserved them from political absorption. In the dark and troubled period which followed, they must have been lost to view—swept away in some deadly encounter with their fellow-countrymen, or possibly with their nearest kinsmen, ranged under the banner of some opposing commander. But, as Fuller finely remarks, “The civil wars diverted the prelates from troubling the Lollards, so that the very storm was a shelter to those poor souls, and the heat of these intestine cruelties cooled the persecution against them.” Truth is a little sacrificed in this sentiment to antithesis, for the prelates never entirely suspended their persecuting measures against the Lollards at that period. By taking the gospel to places little noticed by the prelates, they were sheltered to some extent in their obscurity; but all through that dreary interval we may trace their course in the light of the fires kindled to consume them. John Claydon, a farrier, and Richard Turner, a baker, were burned in Smithfield as Lollards in 1415. William Taylor, a priest in the diocese of Canterbury, suffered in the same manner and for the same cause, in 1422, with John Florence, a tanner, in Norfolk, William White, and many others. In the same year James Risby, as a follower of Wycliffe, was burned in Glasgow. Paul Craw, a Bohemian, was committed to the flames at St. Andrews, in 1434, for holding the views of Huss. In London several suffered about the same time, whose names

Preservation of the Lollards in the Civil Wars.

Succession of martyrs, 1415.

1422.

1434.

are not given, for what are called "mad opinions."

1473. John Goose was martyred in 1473, and on

1494. the 28th of April, 1494, Joan Broughton, the widowed mother of Lady Young, upwards of fourscore years of age, was led to the burning pile. In the year 1494 thirty persons, called the "Lollards of Kye," a district in Ayrshire, suffered martyrdom.

Amongst this number we find the names of Campbell of Cesnock, Schaw of Pollamak, Reid of Basskynning, Helen Chamber, Lady Polkellie, Isabel Chamber, and Lady Stairs. The youthful daughter of William Tylesworth was compelled to apply the torch of the fagots in which he was consumed at Amersham, in

1506. The next day a miller of Missenden

1511. was burned at Buckingham. In 1511

1517. William Carden and Agnes Greville suffered

at Tenterden in Kent, and in 1517 Robert Harrison of Stalden, John Brown of Ashford, and Edward Walker, cutler, of Maidstone, followed in their track, faithful unto death. John Brewster, of Castle Hedingham, in Essex, with William Sweeting, were burned in the same year. John Stilman also suffered

1518. death at that time at Salisbury. In 1518

Robert Cosin at Buckingham, and Christian Shoemaker at Newbury, were added to the "noble army of martyrs." Seven "gospellers"

1519. were committed to the flames together in

1521. 1519. Robert Stelker, one of their companions, was captured and put to death in 1521.

It is most interesting to observe the way in which the testimony of one Christian confessor was transferred to another. The husband of Agnes Greville acknowledges that he had been won to the doctrines

of the Lollards by her conversation and example. He said that his wife had been converted to the views of Wycliffe in the reign of Edward IV., and had continued in them ever after. Her sons—one of them twenty years of age, and the other nineteen, bore similar testimony. Their mother, they said, began to teach them the gospel when they were about seven years of age.

Transmis-
sion of gos-
pel truth.

Agnes
Greville.

John Stilman was charged with having said that Wycliffe was a saint in heaven, and that his book called the “Wycket” was good and holy.

John
Stilman.

“Stilman,” said the vicar-general, “you have confessed before my Lord of London and me, Dr. Hed, that about twenty years past one Stephen Poore, of the diocese of Winchester (with whom you abode six or seven years after), did teach you to believe that the going on pilgrimage or worshiping of images, as the Lady of Walsingham, and others, were not to be used. And that afterward one Richard Smart, who was burned at Salisbury about fourteen or fifteen years past, did read unto you Wycliffe’s “Wycket,” and likewise instructed you to believe that the sacrament of the altar was not the body of Christ, all which things you have erroneously believed.

Richard
Smart.

“Item. You have divers times read the book called Wycliffe’s ‘Wycket,’ which the said Richard Smart did give you eleven years since. At the time of your first apprehension you did hide them in an old oak, and did not reveal them unto the Bishop of Salisbury.”

“The Word of the Lord was precious in those days. The ‘secret disciple’ stole away to the thicket or to the hollow of the decaying oak that he might pore over the manuscript handed down to him by those who had haled to prison, or the flame of whose martyrdom had gleamed over the heads of the crowd assembled to witness his end.” Those who imbibed the sentiments and cherished the pure affections of the gospel, could not remain isolated. Christian fellowship became to them a spiritual necessity. A Romish chronicler says of the early Lollards, “They had one manner of speech, or the same way of talking, and wonderfully agreed in opinion. Both men and women commenced teachers of the gospel in their mother tongue.”* Wycliffe had taught them the lesson inculcated by the Apostle Paul, meekly to instruct those who should oppose themselves. “For God’s love,” he says, “ye simple men beware of pride and vain jangling, and chiding in words against proud clerks of schools and vain religions, and answer ye meekly and prudently to the enemies of God’s law, and pray ye heartily for them that God of his mercy give to them being knowing of Scriptures, meekness and charity, and ever be ye ready. What man teacheth any truth of God, take that meekly with great thanks.”

Willing to communicate, and docile in receiving instruction, these Home Missionaries of the fifteenth century became known to each other by a sacred and fraternal instinct.

It was difficult for a false brother to feign the manner of those who were accustomed to meet

* Knighton de Event C. 2665.

voluntarily for worship; yet sometimes they were deceived. Spies were employed to watch the course of any who were suspected of reading the Bible, and to listen to their conversation, to detect, if possible, by any religious expression, their association with the Christian Brotherhood, or "Known Men." It is only from the register of the bishops who received the reports of these base informers that we learn the particulars respecting their Christian movements. The means of instruction enjoyed by these humble believers were of the simplest order. A few of their number seem to have acted as leaders, and were styled "doctor," or teacher. DR. TYLSWORTH, DR. CHASE, DR. MAN, and DR. COSIN, are mentioned as their "principal instructors."

They could not all read, and of those who had been taught to decipher the manuscript Bible, not many possessed more than a part of it—an epistle or a gospel. They committed, therefore, portions to memory, and sometimes sat up the whole night to copy one of the books lent to them for that purpose.

Some gave a load of hay for a few chapters of St. James or St. Paul in English. Alice Colins, a woman of good memory, was charged with repeating the Ten Commandments and the epistles of James and John. "When any conventicle of these men did meet at Burford," the accuser said, "commonly she was sent for." James Morden, compelled by oath to inform against his friends, said that Agnes Ashford, of Chesham, taught him these words,

"Known
Men." Con-
gregational
Societies.

"Doctors,"
or Teachers.

Mutual
instruction.

"We be the salt of the earth; if it be putrified and banished away, it is nothing worth. A city set upon a hill may not be hid. Teen ye not a candle and put it under a bushel, but set on a candlestick, that it may give light to all in the house. So shine your light before men as they may see your good works, and glorify the Father that is in heaven. No tittle nor letter of the law shall pass over till all this be done." Five times Morden went to Agnes to learn this lesson. She also taught him to say the following words: "Jesus seeing his people, as He went up into a hill, was set, and his disciples came to Him. He opened his mouth and taught them, saying, Blessed be the poor men in spirit, for the kingdom of heaven is theirs. Blessed be mild men, for they shall weld the earth." And twice he came to her to learn this lesson. "These lessons," Bishop Longland records, "the said Agnes was bid to recite before six bishops, who straightway enjoined and commanded her, that she should teach those lessons no more to any man, and especially not to her children."*

THOMAS MAN, their faithful evangelist, spent many years in missionary toils, and visited in turn the counties of Norfolk, Essex, Suffolk, Middlesex, and Buckingham. Thomas Risby, of Stratford, in his confession says, "As he went westward, he found a *great company of well-disposed persons, being of the same judgment touching the sacrament of the Lord's Supper that he was of*, and especially at NEWBURY, where was a *glorious and sweet society of faithful labourers who*

* Ex Regist Longland, fol. 11.

had continued the space of fifteen years together, till at last, by a certain lewd person, whom they trusted and made of their counsel, they were betrayed : and then many of them, to the number of six or seven score, were abjured, and three or four of them were burnt. From thence he came to the Forest of Windsor, where he, hearing of the brethren who were at AMERSHAM, removed thither, where he found a godly and a great company, which had continued in that doctrine and teaching twenty-three years." This congregation of Buckinghamshire men remained till the time of John Longland, Bishop of Lincoln. These Christian societies meeting permanently, if not in name, were in fact Congregational Churches. John Foxe says, "I find and observe, in considering the registers, how one neighbour, resorting and conferring with another, eftsoons with a few words of the first or second talk, did win and turn their minds to that wherein they desired to persuade them, touching the truth of God's Word and his sacraments. To see their travails, their earnest seekings, their burning zeal, their readings, their watchings, their sweet assemblies, their love and concord, their godly living, their faithful demeaning with the faithful may make us now, in these our days of free professions, to blush for shame."

Thomas Man confessed that he had turned seven hundred people to his religion and doctrine, for which he thanked God. He removed ten persons from Amersham, Uxbridge, Burham, and Henley-upon-Thames (where they lived), into Suffolk and

Norfolk, that they might be brought (as he termed it) "out of the devil's mouth."

The "good seed of the kingdom" grew secretly; the "leaven" spread silently, and with a hidden force that no power of man could arrest.

We look in vain at this period for any active or suitable agency for the Christian instruction of the people, apart from that to be found in the voluntary and secret Congregational societies of the Lollards. The charge of six bishops to Agnes Ashford, not to repeat the words of the Beatitudes of Christ, even to her children, on pain of imprisonment or death, may be taken as an indication of the spiritual blindness of the Romish clergy, and of their unfitness for the "work of the ministry."

The service of the Church was kept up in its external splendour. Daily the people attended mass, repeating paternosters as they counted the beads of their rosaries, or read the "Offices of Our Lady." The priests studied cathedral worship as one of the fine arts; and, by a combination of architectural skill, musical taste, and histrionic talent, it was brought to perfection. Matins, vespers, compline—with their accompaniments of processions, incense, and genuflexions—furnished the most attractive spectacle for all classes of society; but the purlieus of the priory or of the minsters were the most notorious places of infamy known in the land. Vice and crime found in different shrines the privilege of sanctuary; and the magnificent tombs visited by ignorant and besotted pilgrims, yielded a harvest of gain to the priests who fostered their delusions.

Light in
Congrega-
tional so-
cieties.

In contemporary correspondence the archbishop is described as with his troops "robbing up and down the town of Ripon, adorned with breastplates, vambrace and rerebrace, greves and quishers, gorgett and salett, long spears and lancegaves."* "The chantry priests and other inferior clergy," we are told, "having certain rights in churches and chapels, were continually at variance with the rectors, and endeavouring to make a party in different parishes against them. Others, among the clergy, instead of employing their leisure in study, frequented the taverns, shows, cells of suspected women, or unlawful games."

Archbishop
"robbing
up and
down."

Before we leave the Lollards, it is only just to state, that some attempts were made either to convince them or to check their progress, than by other means than torture or martyrdom. It may throw light on the interior life of the followers of Wycliffe to notice briefly the writings of one of their opponents. Reginald Pecock, D.D., "some-time Lord Bishop of Chichester," was one of their most moderate antagonists. He speaks of them as *Bible men*, or *known men*. They formed no distinct party, and their views and opinions were diversified according to their degree of scriptural knowledge. In a rare tract, entitled "The Lanterne of Lyght," we learn the importance attached by them to the study of the Scriptures. The writer says:—

Bishop
Pecock.

"God, that is good in Himself, fair in his angels, marvellous in his saints, merciful upon sinners, have mercy upon us now and ever, and give us to hold the way of truth in these

* Plumpton Correspondence, Preface, liv.

days of great tribulation; for how many that seemed to be stable in virtue are fallen from their holy purpose, dreading loss and pain; as Christ said that the abundance of wickedness shall cool the charity of man. For Satan hath now destroyed the world by his lieutenant, that man may be borne about in divers doubts, as waves of the sea, wretchedly divided in opinions one against another. But Saint Paul did set one accord among the Christian people, saying, There is but one Lord, that all should love and dread; one faith, that all men should keep and believe without varying; and one baptism, that all men should have, and steadfastly hold without defiling. Alas! how is this unity broken, that men unruléd walk after their own lusts, as beasts in the corn. Truly the wicked man that Christ spake of hath done this deed, for he hath sown tares and cockle upon the seed of God. This wicked enemy is Antichrist, that clouteth his laws, as rotten rags, to the clean cloth of Christ's gospel; and therefore, in this time of tribulation and hideous darkness, let us seek the Lanterne of Light, whereof the prophet speaketh. Lord, thy word is a lanterne to my feet; for as far as the light of this lanterne shineth, so far darkness of sin, and clouds of temptation of the fiend, vanished away, and may not abide."

Pecock was of opinion that the *Bible men* spent too much time in these studies, and held up to them the state of Bohemia as a warning.

"Certes," he says, "in this wise and in this now said manner, and by this now said cause, befel the rueful and weepable destruction of the worthy city and university of Prague, and of the whole realm of Bohemia, as I have had thereof information enough. And now, after the destruction of the realm, the people been glad for to resort and turn again into the catholic and general faith and love of the Church, and in her poverty buildeth up again what was burnt, and thrown down, and none of her holdings can thrive. But for that Christ in his prophecying must needs be true—that each kingdom divided in himself shall be destroyed—therefore to him befel the now said wretched mischance. God for his mercy and pity keep England, that (he) become not into like dance. But

Pecock's
warning.

for to turn herefro again unto our *Bible-men*. I pray, say they to me, when among you is rise a strife in holdings and opinions (because that each of you trusteth to his own study in the Bible alone, and will have all truths of men's moral conversation there groundd), what judge may thereto be assigned in earth, save reason and the before-said doom of reason? For though men should be judges, yet so must they be by use of the reason and doom of reason; and if this be true, who should then be better or so well use demean and execute this reason and the said doom as should the men which have spend so mich labour about thilk craft? And these ben the now before-said clerks. And therefore ye *Bible-men* by this here now said which ye must needs grant for experience which ye have of the disturbance of Bohemia, and also of the disturbance and divers feelings had among you self now in England, so that some of you been cleped *doctour-mongers*, and some been cleped *opinion-holders*, and some ben *neutrales*. That of so presumptuous a schism, abomination to other men, and shame to you it is to be here, rebuke you you self, forasmuch as ye wolden not before this time allow that reason and his doom should have such and so great interest in the law of God, and in expounding of Holy Scripture as I have said and proved him to have.

"And also hereby take ye a sufficient mark that ye have need for to have recourse and counsel with such now before-said clerks, *though ye wolden labour and pore and dote all the days of your life in the Bible* alone, and dread ye of the effect which befel the Bohemians for like cause and misgovernance in holding the first-said opinion, and by so much the more dread ye thilk effect by how much by Christ it is pronounced for to fall. Wherever schism and division is continued, for He saith, Matt. xii., that every kingdom or community divided in himself shall be destroyed. But then, againward, ye must beware of that, even as one star is different from another star in clearness, so one clerk is different from another in cunning; and therefore take heed to doom of clear reason in this matter, which is also remembered to us by the wise man Ecclesiasticus vi. 6, thus, "Many be to thee peaceable, but of a thousand one be thy counsellor." And in special beware that thou not accept and take a clerk for to be sufficient to thee in the now said purpose by this alone that he may wear a "pilioun" (a doctor's hat) on his head. Neither by

this, that he is a famous and pleasant preacher to people in a pulpit; neither by this, that he is a great and 'thikke rateler' out of texts of holy Scripture, or of doctors in feasts, or in other companies, for certes experience hath oft taught and may here teach surely enough that some wearers of 'piliouns' in school of divinity hav scantly be worthy for to be in the same school a good scholar; and full many of the second and third sorts appearing full glorious to the hearing of the lay party, and also some other manner of clerks when they should aim for to dispute and examine and try and judge in hard doubts of God's law, were not worthy to these rennethis (scarcely) open the mouth. I detect here no man in special.

"Who ever can prove himself to be none such as I have here now spoken of, he thereby sheweth well to be none of hem.

"Well, I wot that though the office of preaching is full profitable unto the end of exhortation and of remembrance, certes it is not so unto the end of best teaching. For why it is not so unto the end of formal and groundly disputing, arguing, and proving, without which no sure trial may be made upon any hard and doubtable question of man's conversation, and yet if such manner of arguing and groundly proving should be set in sermoning, the sermon should be full unsavoury; and if the manner of uttering which is savoury in a sermoning should be set and used in the office of school proving and determining, all the work thereof should be the unsavourier and the unspeedier, and therefore of the office and work (whereof I have spoken before to be so necessary, as is said to all the world) into repressing of errors and into grounding of all God's laws, the teaching must be take by other testimony and witnesses than by wearing of pilioun or by great cunning of preaching, and by savoury uttering thereof, or by great plenteous out hilding (pouring) of texts written in the Bible or in doctors. For many which never learned further in schools than her grammar, kunnen such texts, and by narrations, and parables, and likenesses preach full gloriously into the pleasaunce and into profit of the people, and seem therefore and thereby full wise, and if they were opposed in any of the texts, and parables, and other preachable processes, they could not defend and maintain any of them, neither con then put out sufficiently the very and full duest understanding of any one of hem."

His lordship did not consider the twofold object of the ministry, to proclaim the offer of mercy in the gospel, and to impart sound and systematic instruction. Hence he despised the preaching of the Lollards, who, in many cases, might have but a partial knowledge of the truth they were anxious to disseminate. There is reason to believe, however, that the simplest Lollard preachers were greatly in advance of the friars; and if the bishop criticized their sermons, they did not spare the priests in turn. The author of the “Lanterne” says:—

“In their church they give themselves to song, and too little to preaching. The members of Christ’s Church pray with devotion for forgiveness, and freshly bringing to mind the kindness of their God. Others pray, making much noise, mumbling with their lips they nekkennen what.” “They preach chronicles, with dreamings and tales. Readers in Christ’s Church read holy lessons, and tenden to their reading with medeful devotion. They read distinctly, without interruption, or any feigned intermission, or over-skiping of letter, word, or syllable; and they accord in charity, and do all things in order. But readers in the other Church jangle their lessons as jayes chatteren in the cage, and wote not what they mean; stryving with them for nought, eche agaynst other for rules of ther ordynall, and many vayne questions; and if they understanden the lesson whan it is reade, or any part of Godes lawe when it is declared, sone they treden it under the fote, and haten it in theyr works.”

The “Lanterne” on preachers and readers.

Pecock opposed the views of church polity held by the *Bible-men*. He says: “Thei wolen alle preestis to be in oon degre, and noon of hem to be aboue other of hem; and they wolen that undir preestis be dekenys, and no mo orders, statis, or degrees in the clergie at al.”*

Congregational principles of the Bible-men.

The argument of his lordship in defence of the

* Pecock’s Repressor, vol. ii. p. 417.

hierarchical order is rather too extended for our limits, but one or two points in it will be
 Opposed by Pecock. sufficient to show its drift. The *Bible-men*

contended, that if the variety of ranks in the clergy had been profitable to the Church, Christ, its greatest friend, would have appointed them, which He "did not do." Pecock replied that "Christ willed" the hierarchical government "to be reared up by the prudence of men after his passing from this world, and that He alloweth and approveth the said rearing and setting up by men's prudence, into the clergy and into the Church, as if He had so done it immediately by his own person." In proof of this he says Christ constituted Peter the head of the

Apostles. He takes large latitude in his
 His comprehensive logic. argument. "Al forbodun thing is forbuden bi Holi Scripture, or by doom of resoun, or bi manny's lawe; for as myche as we kunnen fynde no mo autentik forbeders. But so it is, that al unleeful thing is forbodun. Wherefore al unleeful thing is forbodun bi Holi Scripture, or bi doom of resoun, or bi manny's lawe. And thanne further thus, al unleeful thing is forbodun of Holi Scripture, or bi doom of resoun or my manny's law. Wherefore al not forbodun bi Holi Scripture, or resoun, or by manni's lawe, is not unleeful."

After this example of comprehensive logic, it is not needful to follow the bishop further. He excuses the vices of the clergy by reference to the common frailties of humanity. He says,

Vicious clergy excused. "that though of al hool number of Adam's children, some been ordained to be priests and deacons, and some been ordained to be craftiose-men and 'merchaundis,' and some to be other

labourers, yet all they, both priests and deacons, and all other lay persons, be made of one lump of matter, descending from Adam. And priests been born under conjunctions and constellations, stirring and moving into as great freelnes [frailty] and bad manners as other lay men been born; and also priests been of as bad kindly complexions, moving into bad and sharp passions, as been lay men; and so all freeness which is naturally, and strongly, and fiercely in lay men, been like mich in priests.”*

The poets and ballad-makers entered warmly into the Lollard conflict. The keen strokes of Chaucer are well known. His descriptions of the “Pardoner,” the “Friar Limitour,” and others of the monastic craft, must have had a powerful effect on the popular mind. The “Complaint of the Ploughman,” and the audacious questions of “Jack of Upland,” no doubt made a deep and lasting impression. On the side of the monks we have the verses of “Daws,” and others, but their rhymes are more curious than edifying. The following is a specimen:—

The battles
of the poets
and ballad-
makers.

“Lo, he that can be Criste's clerc,
And knowe the knottes of his crede,
Now may'se a wonder wonder werke
Of hard happes to take goud heede.
The dome of dethe is hevy drede
For hymn that wol not mercy crye.
Than is my rede, for mucke ne mede
That no man melle of Lollardyo

“I sey for meself, yut wist I never,
But now late what hit shuld be,

* Pecock's Repressor, vol. ii. p. 450.

And, by my trouthe, I have wel lever
 No more kyn than my a, b, c.
 To lolle so hie in suyche degré,
 Hit is no perfit profecie;
 Sauf seker sample to the and me
 To be war of Lollardie.

“The game is nozt to Lolle so hie
 Their fete failen foudement;
 And yut is a moche folie
 For fals beleve to ben brent.
 Ther the Bibelle is al myswent
 To jangle of Job or Jeremye,
 That construen hit after her entent
 For lewde lust of Lollardie.

“Hit is unkindly for a knizt,
 That shuld a kynge’s castel kepe,
 To bable the Bibel day and nizht
 In resting tyme when he shuld slepe;
 And carefoly away to crepe.
 For alle the chief of chivalrie
 Wel aught hym to waile and wepe,
 That suyche lust hath in Lollardie.

“An *old castel* and not repaired,
 With wast walles and wowes wide;
 The wages ben ful yvel wared
 With suiche a capitayne to abide;
 That rere the riot for to ride
 Agayns the kynge and his clergie
 With prive, peyne, and pore pride,
 Ther is a poynt of Lollardie.”*

There is no more intrinsic value in these specimens of unintelligible doggerel, than in the rusty and broken pieces of ancient armour to be found in the ruins of a fortress or on the field of battle; but they are memorials of a conflict, the results of which still remain; and we notice them simply to indicate the nature and course of the momentous struggle.

* MS. Cotton Vespas., B. xvi., fol. 2; Wright.

CHAPTER IX.

GREAT social changes preceded the Reformation of the sixteenth century. COLUMBUS, with sublime perseverance, led the way in maritime adventure. It is interesting to know that he was impelled in his course of discovery by religious motives. He writes, March 14th, 1493: "But these great and marvellous results are not to be attributed to any merit of mine, but to the holy Christian faith, and to the piety and religion of our Sovereigns; for that which the unaided intellect of man could not accomplish, the Spirit of God has granted to human exertions, for God is wont to hear the prayers of his servants who love his precepts, even to the performance of apparent impossibilities."* Henry VII., perceiving his error in neglecting the proposals of the illustrious navigator, attempted to retrieve it by accepting the services of JOHN CABOT, a citizen of Venice. A patent was granted by the avaricious monarch on the 5th of March, 1495-6, authorizing him, and his son, Lewis Sebastian, and Sancius, to sail with a small fleet, under the English flag, to the east, the west, and the north, and to seek out lands unknown to any Christian people.

Social
changes
in the
sixteenth
century.

Columbus,
1493.

JOHN
CABOT.

* Select Letters of Columbus. Hakluyt Society, p. 16.

SEBASTIAN CABOT (who was a native of Bristol), in the following year, sailed in the ship "Matthew," and about five of the clock in the morning on the 24th of June, touched the shores of America. He was the first European, so far as is known, to set his foot on the mighty strand. Columbus did not reach the mainland until August, 1498. Cabot claimed for England, by the right of discovery, all the territory between the point of his first landing, in the 38th degree of north latitude, and southward to the 67th degree. This discovery alone must have given a vast expansion to the ideas of the people of Europe. All classes of society were stimulated by the prospect opened before them.

The commerce of England, originally fostered by Edward III., had been developed at this period to a considerable extent. Manufactures, introduced by Flemish settlers, had increased in proportion, and the efforts of Parliament were constantly directed to promote their growth. Foreign relations were maintained in a more friendly spirit. The merchants of the Hanse towns had factories in the east coast of England, besides the Steelyard, in London—the principal of which were at Lynn, in Norfolk, and Boston, in Lincolnshire.

British factories were established in several of the principal cities of Europe. In connection with the treaties of peace, Henry VII. signed a document called the "GREAT INTERCOURSE." This important instrument was ratified in April, 1496, and secured a solid basis for mercantile transactions.

English
commerce
fostered.

The "Great
Inter-
course."

The path was opened unconsciously, by men who had other aims, for the intercommunication of co-workers who were called, in reference to religious reformation, to prepare a "highway for God."

Simultaneously with the development of commerce—though an entirely separate movement—we find at this time also the revival of letters.

The fall of Constantinople, May 29th, 1453, and the consequent subjugation of the

Fall of Constantinople,
1453.

Greek Empire to the Ottoman power in 1461, caused the dispersion of the treasures which furnished to Europe the means and

1461.

the stimulus for classical scholarship. Many writers have referred to this event as the commencement of the revival of learning; but the probability is that, had there not been students already initiated in such literature, the scattered manuscripts would have perished from neglect on the part of those who were ignorant of their proper value.

"The knowledge of Greek in Italy dates from the beginning of the century, from the time of Emanuel Chrysoloras; and amid the many difficulties which attended the acquisition

Greek
learning.

of that language, almost every Italian scholar of any pretension had some acquaintance with it; while Filelgo, Guarino, Curispe, Leonard Brum, and others, long before the fall of Constantinople, had become masters of it. The multitude of books translated discloses the demand for the materials embalmed in the Greek language, and the power to draw them out of the wrappers in which they were hid. Then, again, if we compare the Greeks, who,

twenty years or a generation before the fall of the Byzantine capital, had obtained a standing in Italy, who were teaching in the public schools, preparing translations, or, as Churchmen in high places, commending their native tongue with those who established themselves in Italy or beyond the mountains after that event, we shall find the former to have done as much for letters, and even for the cultivation of the Greek tongue, as the latter; and, finally, a great mass of manuscripts had been brought from Greece years before Constantinople fell—as is shown

1453. both by direct accounts of their importation, by copies made early in the fifteenth century, and by the translations that were executed before 1453.” *

The immediate effect of the revival of letters was not apparently favourable to the cause of Christianity. The Humanists, as they were termed, were inflated with the pride of discovery, and regarded all around them with contempt. They became half paganized by their absorption in classical literature, and imitated, both in their writings and in their conduct, the licentiousness of ancient Greece and Rome. “While the common people sank into an almost pagan superstition, and looked for salvation to mere ceremonial practices, the opinions of the upper classes were of an anti-religious tendency.” “No one passed,” says P. Ant. Bandino, “for an accomplished man, who did not entertain heretical opinions about Christianity; at the court, the ordinances of the catholic church, and passages of Holy Writ, were

* President Woolsey in *New Englander*.

spoken of only in a jesting manner; the mysteries of the faith were despised.”*

This laxity of morals extended to the Romish priesthood in other countries. Men who had no desire for learning yielded to the general corrupting influence.

“By the revival of learning,” says Dean Hook, “the minds of the clergy, as well as of the laity, the universal mind of Europe had been aroused.

But there was a large body of the clergy Paganized clergy.

whose time was occupied by attention to a ritualism which had become cumbersome, and to the majority of the people unintelligible. Against superstitious observances the mind revolted, yet, from very perverseness, they were urged the more by those of the clergy, whose intellectual powers were absorbed in the arrangement of a vestment, or whose souls were corrupted by concealing what they more than suspected to be an imposture. When religion had ceased to be an enthusiasm, and when the reins of moral discipline were relaxed, the constrained celibacy of the clergy was doing its evil work, and demoralizing the whole tone of society. They indulged in revellings, drunkenness, and low scenes of debauchery.”†

“Feelings of great indignation,” continues the Dean, “*were aroused in good and pious people, who still sanctified by their presence the villages and the towns of the land: the ten, the forty, the eighty for whom a town or a village was spared, the seven*

* Ranke's History of the Popes, c. 1, sec. 3.

† See Archbishop Bouchier's Letter on the Iniquities and Irregularities prevalent among the Clergy; Wilkins, iii. 573; Spelman, ii. 662; Linwood, 288; Wilkins, iii. 314, 573; Cotton MSS. Cleop, iii.

thousand in Israel, who in the worst of times, remained true to their God and loyal to their Saviour.

Piety in
the Lollard
congrega-
tions. Some were more earnest in prayer—*some were reading the writings of the Lollards ; whilst others were weeping, as the profane*

were ridiculing all religion, and subjecting the sentiments of piety to a sneer, while the openly profane indulged the malignity of their nature by seeking to uproot society, that, in the scramble which would ensue, they might appropriate to themselves some portion of the fruits." What were these humble gatherings of earnest and devout people, who exerted this salutary influence, but so many Voluntary and Congregational Churches ?

Notwithstanding the demoralized society coincident with the restoration of classical literature, instruments were selected and prepared by the divine hand for the needed work of reformation in the scholars who were fitted by their learning and piety for this important service.

Besides the recovery of the classic writings of Greece and Rome, as a preparation for the better acquaintance with the New Testament, it was needful that there should also be scholars thoroughly versed in the Hebrew and Aramaic languages, in order to a complete revision of the sacred text.

Revival of
Hebrew
learning.* But what inducement could be furnished at such a period to stimulate students to master the difficulties involved in this branch of learning ? The diligence of the classical scholar was rewarded by the acquisition of treasures

* Ginsburg, Munk, Franck, Masson, Etheridge.

long concealed from the world, and led to the highest academic distinction. Apart from a sincere desire to understand more clearly the volume of revelation, which did not then exist in the eager competitors for scholastic honours, there might seem to be no motive for turning to the long-neglected language of a despised and scattered race. An intense curiosity, however, was awakened on the part of many to fathom the mysteries of the Cabalistic theosophy, and as an essential qualification for becoming acquainted with it, they devoted themselves to the study of Hebrew. Christian scholars sought out Jewish teachers competent to initiate them into their peculiar literature. To understand the cause of the interest thus awakened, we must glance briefly at the course of philosophical inquiry amongst the Jewish literati from the time of their connection with Arabian metaphysicians. About a century after the appearance of Islamism, many independent minds began to reason upon the teaching which they had till then accepted as a matter of faith, and the opinions they promulgated became identified with a number of metaphysical schools designated by various names. Their mental activity prepared them to appreciate the Greek literature commended to them by learned Syrian or Chaldean Christians, living in the capacity of physicians at the court of the Caliphs. Blending the ideas thus received with their own speculations, other metaphysical schools were originated, and in turn the works of Arabic philosophers were introduced to the Christian world. Simultaneously, Arabic and Jewish philosophic leaders appeared

Arabian
metaphy-
sicians.

in constant succession, framing different theories according to the diversified conclusions at which they respectively arrived. Some devoted themselves to the careful examination of Rabbinical traditions, and others ranged at will in metaphysical flights, regardless of the authority of divine revelation, and equally indifferent to the dictates of sober reason. On the acquisition of supremacy in Spain, the Saracenic conquerors established universities at Cordova and Toledo. As their power began to wane in 1305, the Jews, driven out of the Babylonian patriarchate, found here protection and favour. Hebrew science received a powerful influence, and the Jews formed colleges of their own in Spain, Italy, and France. It was their golden age. They manifested great intellectual vigour, and created a considerable literature. But in 1492, the expulsion of the Jews from the whole of the Spanish empire destroyed the focus of Hebrew civilization. The downfall of scholasticism at the same time contributed to strike a blow at metaphysical studies amongst the persecuted children of Israel, who, crushed down everywhere under a terrible system of oppression, were prevented from taking a part in the revival of intellectual life now dawning throughout Europe.

Metaphysical schools.

Saracenic in Spain, 1305.

Jews expelled from Spain, 1492.

Judæo-Spanish civilization disappeared, and for a long time nothing took its place. Isaac Abravanel and his illustrious son were the two solitary exceptions to the general decay. Distinguished for his genius, learning, and address, he received many tokens of favour from Alfonso, King of Portugal,

who appointed him a privy councillor. Subsequently he enjoyed the favour of Ferdinand and Isabella, but they had no power to withstand the influence of the chief inquisitor, when he demanded the confiscation of the property of the Jews, and their expulsion from the country. At a stroke of the pen in March, 1492, a hundred and sixty thousand families were made desolate, and suffered miseries too horrible to depict. 1492.
 Abravanel, after many wanderings, found occupation in Venice, and wrote his commentaries there on the four books of Moses, and some of the prophets. His son Leo, or Judah Hebræus, wrote 1502.
 his "*Dialoghi*" (1502), in which he endeavoured to reconcile Plato with Aristotle, under the auspices of the Cabala and of Neo Platonism. His work excited great interest in Italy.

The *Sohar* (*splendour*) regarded as the Bible of the Cabala was the production of Moses de Leon (d. 1305), who published it as the work of R. Simon ben Jochai. The pretensions of the Cabala were of the most extraordinary character. "The Cabala," we are told, "was first taught by God Himself, to a select company of angels, who formed a theosophic school in Paradise. After the fall of the angels He most graciously communicated this heavenly doctrine to the disobedient child of earth to furnish the protoplasts with the means of returning to their pristine nobility and felicity." The means of its regular transmission from Adam to Noah, Abraham, and to the rest of the Hebrew representatives, are described with circumstantial precision, and we learn the prodigies

that attended its final communication to Simon ben Jochei:—

“The object of the Cabala is to solve all mysteries left unexplained by the volume of revelation. As for example the transition from the infinite to the finite; the procedure of Its object. multifariousness from an absolute unity, and of matter from a pure intelligence in the operation of pure intelligence upon matter, in spite of the infinite gulf between them; the relationship of the Creator to the creature, so as to be able to exercise supervision and providence. It, moreover, endeavours to show how it is that the Bible gives names and assigns attributes and a form to so spiritual a Being; how the existence of evil is compatible with the infinite goodness of God, and what is the divine intention about this creation?”*

These wonders are not made known by any direct mode of explanation, but are said to be disclosed by a particular key to the ordinary narratives of certain portions of the Bible:—

“Woe be to the son of man who says that the Tora (Pentateuch) contains common sayings and ordinary narratives. Every word of the law has a sublime sense and a heavenly mystery. When it descended on earth, the law had Interpretation of the Cabala. to put on an earthly garment to be understood by it, and the narratives are its garment. The fools of this world look at nothing else but this garment, which consists of the narratives in the Law; they do not know any more, and do not understand what is beneath this garment. But those who have more understanding do not look at the garment but at the body beneath it (*i.e.* the moral), whilst the wisest, the servants of the heavenly King, those who dwell at Mount Sinai, look at nothing else but the soul (*i.e.* the secret doctrine), which is the root of all the real Law, and these are destined in the world to come to behold the soul of this soul (that is the Deity), which breathes in this Law.”*

To those who had been led to accept as true the

* Ginsburg's Kabbala.

* Sohar, iii, 152 a.

“lying wonders” of the monks, there was a peculiar fascination in these cabalistic marvels—
 transcending beyond measure all other in-
 ventions in their elevation and in the ex-
 tent of their range. A man who could

Its fascina-
 tion to
 lovers of
 the marvel-
 lous.

persuade himself that he might now possess the key that would unfold to him the last secrets of the universe, and still more enable him to enter into the mystery of the divine existence, might well be concerned to obtain it without delay. They found the teachers they required. Many of the Jews, to escape the violence of persecution, became nominally Christians. Amongst them were men of most distinguished attainments and extraordinary knowledge of Hebrew and Biblical literature. These soon began to spread the knowledge of the sacred language by the aid of the newly-invented art of printing. As many of the Jewish converts were cabalists, they also initiated their Gentile disciples into its mysteries, and made almost as large a number of converts amongst Christians to this esoteric doctrine as Christianity had

Taught by
 Jewish
 converts.

gained among the Jews. Foremost in the ranks of Jewish converts who laboured in the department of Biblical literature, were Alphonso de Alcala, Paul Coronel, and Alphonso de Zamora, who were employed in editing the celebrated Complutensian Polyglott, the sixth volume of which is almost entirely the work of Zamora. To these are to be added Felix Pratensis, the famous editor of the editio princeps of Bomberg’s Rabbinic Bible, and Jacob b. Chajim, the editor of the second edition of Bomberg’s Rabbinic Bible, who immortalized his name by

his elaborate introduction to this Bible, and by compiling and editing for the first time the critical apparatus of the Old Testament, called the Massorah. The Jews themselves had a still greater phalanx of literary and scientific men who laboured in the department of Biblical exegesis, the traditional law—the Cabala—philosophy, and astronomy.

Among the more distinguished Biblical scholars were Don Isaac b. Jebudah Abravanel (1437—1509), already mentioned, who wrote commentaries on nearly the whole of the Hebrew Scriptures; Messer Leon, or Jehudah b. Jechiel, as he is called in Hebrew (1430—1505), Rabbi and physician at Mantua, who wrote a very elaborate grammar, a masterly treatise on Hebrew rhetoric, after the manner of Aristotle, Cicero, and Quintillian, and a treatise on Hebrew logic; the two Aramas, Isaac (1430—1494), the father (1430—1494) and Meier the son (1470—1566), both of whom wrote extensive expositions of sundry books of Scriptures; Abraham Saccuto (1450—1520), the famous historian and lexicographer and commentator; Abraham de Balmes (1450—1521), physician, philosopher, and grammarian; Jacob Mantino a distinguished Hebraist and physician; Abraham Farissol (1451—1525), the famous cosmographer and commentator; Levi b. Chabib, Isaac b. Joseph Caro, Jacob Berab, Obediah Seforno, Jacob b. Jechiel Loanz, Joseph Ibn Jachja, with many others, contributed materially to the diffusion of Biblical knowledge in its sundry departments. None of these Hebraists, the contemporaries

Jewish
scholars,
1437—1509

1430—1505.

1430—1494.

1470—1566.

1450—1520.

1450—1521.

1451—1525.

of ELIAS LEVITA, equalled him in his successful efforts in mastering the grammatical structure of the Hebrew tongue, and in furnishing the critical apparatus necessary for the intelligent examination of the sacred text. These stores of learning accumulated by the unwearied diligence of Hebrew scholars, were available for the reformers of the sixteenth century, but they might have remained unknown or long neglected but for the intense curiosity felt by many to penetrate the mysteries of the Cabala.

Elias
Levita.

RAYMOND LULL (1236—1315), was one of the first to seek the privilege of initiation. He was greatly interested in the Hebrew race, and deeply anxious for their conversion, by methods more in accordance with the spirit of the gospel than the coercive methods usually employed. He proposed to found missionary colleges, in which the students might be taught the languages of heathen countries, and with the approbation of Pope Clement V., and the Council of Vienne, professors of Hebrew, Chaldee, and Arabic, were supported at Rome.* Under the strange illusion, that the Cabala, with its three-fold mode of interpretation (the arithmetical, that of permutation, and that of denoting signs), contained a divine science that would be useful in his new method of persuasion. He stimulated others to study the cabalistic writings; and a succession of votaries to the "divine science," continued from that period to the sixteenth century. The mania for this strange theosophy, set in with full force, when

Raymond
Lull, 1236
—1315.

* Neander, vii. p. 268.

adopted by PICO DELLA MIRANDOLA (b. 1463).

Mirandola, He purchased sixty Hebrew manuscripts
1463. from a man who persuaded him that

they were composed by order of Ezra, and plunged into the study of them, under the conviction that he had found the key which was to open to him the principal door of knowledge. Anxious to master the Cabala, he requested instruction from Elias del Medigo, or Elias Cretenses, as he is sometimes called, who had given him his first lessons in Hebrew, as in Aristotelean Arabic philosophy. Elias del Medigo declined the task from a conscientious objection to the science. Pico applied to Jochanon Allemanno, a Rabbi, from Constantinople, who had settled down in Italy and was profoundly versed in the cabalistic lore, and satisfied himself that nothing could furnish or more completely demonstrate the truth of Christianity. As the result of his investigations, he published, in 1486, when only

1486. twenty-four years of age, nine hundred theses, which were placarded in Rome,

and amongst which was the following: "No science yields greater proof of the divinity of Christ than magic and the Cabala." In the first instance, indeed, he made more discoveries than were welcome to the Pope; such, for example, as the following: "Neither the cross, nor any other image should be adored, and that the words, 'this is my body,' must not be understood materially, but as being a sign (*signification*). Pico, however, explained himself to the satisfaction of the Church. So delighted was the Pope with the discovery, that he wished to have the cabalistic writings translated into Latin,

for the use of divinity students. Pico, with the aid of his Jewish teacher, promptly gratified the desire, in this respect, of the Supreme Pontiff. The Cabala, and Hebrew, as well as Aramaic, the clue to this esoteric doctrine, now became the favourite studies, to the neglect of the classics. Popes, cardinals, princes, statesmen, warriors, high and low, old and young, were in search for Jewish teachers. During this cabalistic epidemic, REUCHLIN, 1445—1521, visited Rome in 1482, as the private secretary of Eberhard, the Bearded, where he ^{Reuchlin, 1445—1521.} made the splendid oration before the Pope, which elicited from his Holiness the declaration, that Reuchlin deserved to be ranked with the best orators of France and Italy. From Rome, Eberhard took him to Florence, where he became acquainted with Mirandola, and the Cabala, and with the assistance of a Jewish teacher, Jacob b. Jechiel Loanz, studied its mysteries, and published his first treatise on the subject, entitled, "*De Verbo Mirifico*," at Basle, in 1494. The work was received with marvellous interest, as a new revelation from heaven. Conrad Leontanus, writing to Wimphelius, says: "I never saw anything more beautiful or admirable than his work, "*De Verbo Mirifico*," which easily convinces him who reads it, that no philosopher, whether Jew or Christian, is superior to Reuchlin." Argidius, General of the Eremites, wrote to the holy Augustine. "That Reuchlin had rendered him, as well as the rest of mankind, happy, by his works, which had made known to all a thing hitherto unheard of." Philip Berodaldus, the younger, sent him word, "That Pope Leo X. had

read his Pythagorean book greedily, as he did all good 'books:' afterwards the Cardinal Medici had done so, and he himself should soon enjoy it."

Reuchlin, strange to say, is, by some, called the "Father of the Reformation." His Hebrew learning, undoubtedly, was of great service, and he embraced, ultimately, evangelical doctrines; but from his lofty and incoherent philosophical dreams, we may account, in part, for the fact that the leaders of the great reforming movement overlooked the plainest teachings of the New Testament, as to the Congregational polity of the Church. Their attention was absorbed in watching the clouds, when they should have taken heed to the Word of God, as a "lamp to their feet." They failed to recognize the pattern given by inspiration from its divine simplicity. Looking for "some great thing," they invented cumbrous ecclesiastic machinery, adapted to states or nationalities, when they should have adopted the system, suited like the gospel, for men in all social conditions, and permanent as the truth which endureth for ever.

We must not overlook, in connection with the transitionary period now under review, the invention of printing. Nicholas Belward tells us that in 1424 a copy of the New Testament cost a sum equal to twenty pounds in our own day. In that year John Gutenberg, a young man living in Strasburg, on the banks of the Rhine, assisted by Andrew Dritzchen and two other artisans, turned his attention to the construction of metal types. Their experiments were kept profoundly secret until the death of Dritzchen, when Gutenberg

Invention
of printing,
1424.

was compelled, from the failure of his pecuniary resources, to return, in 1445—6, to his native city, Mentz. To obtain needful assistance for printing the Latin Bible (the first work attempted), he communicated his design to John Faust, a goldsmith of the city; and between 1450 and 1455 brought out an admirably-executed volume of twelve hundred and eighty-two pages. The siege of Mentz, in 1464, broke up the printing monopoly of Faust, and gave a kind of ubiquity to the press. Two German printers, Conrad Sweynheim and Arnold Pannartz, established a printing-office at Rome in 1467, and the work was carried on with such vigour, that the Secretary of the Vatican “scarcely allowed himself to sleep.” Writing in ecstasy to the Pope, he says: “It was in your days that, among other divine favours, this blessing was bestowed on the Christian world, that every poor scholar can purchase for himself a library for a small sum; and that those volumes which hitherto could scarce be bought for a thousand crowns may now be procured for less than twenty, very well printed, and free from faults, with which manuscripts used to abound; for such is the art of our printers and letter-makers, that no ancient or modern discovery is comparable to it.” *

1445—6.

1450—1455.

German
printers at
Rome,
1467.

Gaspar of Verona, in his “Life of Paul II.,” says: “At this time certain youths, and they Germans, came to the most holy city, Rome, who in one month formed (*i.e.*, printed) ‘Lactantius Firmianas on the Creation of Man, on God’s Anger, and

* Preface of Andreas to Jerome’s Epistles; Anderson, *Introd.*, p. lii.

against the Gentiles,' and produced two hundred books of this sort every month. The methods of their art would be very difficult to describe, but very many persons are fully acquainted with it. The invention is one of great ingenuity. They have also printed (fruxerunt) Augustin's 'City of God,' as well as 'Cicero de Oratore' and his Letters; and these they have been selling at a small price, and they mean to print other manuscripts in the same way." *

Printing with Greek types was carried to perfection by Manutius Aldus at Venice. From 1501 to 1505 he was able to publish a volume from original manuscripts every month, in folio or in octavo.

The art of printing spread with wonderful rapidity. "In ten years only after the capture of Mentz, the art had reached to upwards of thirty cities and towns, including Venice and Strasburg, Paris and Antwerp: in only ten years more, ninety other places had followed the example, including Basle and Brussels, Westminster, Oxford, and London, Geneva, Leipsic, and Vienna.

"In short, before the close of this century—a space of only thirty-eight years from the capture of Mentz—the press was busy in at least two hundred and twenty different places throughout Europe; and the number of printing-presses was far above a thousand." †

A succession of eminent men arose as printers,

* Muratori, *Per. Ital. Script.* iii. 2 col. 1046.

† Anderson, *Introd.*, liv.

who combined, with the greatest skill and the utmost care, accurate classical knowledge; and attracted toward their establishments the ripest scholars of their time. **MANUTIUS ALDUS**, of Venice; **FROBEN** and **AMBERBACH**, of Basle; **KOBERGER**, of Nuremburg; **HANS LUFT**, of Marburg; **STEPHENS**, of Paris; with gifted and conscientious men who, in the direction of the press, rendered service of incalculable value to the cause of the Reformation. Great printers.

CHAPTER X.

BETWEEN the Lollards and the Christian confessors of the sixteenth century there arose a class of Partial reformers. partial reformers, whose course it is somewhat difficult to exhibit. They were so cautious in their movements, and often so reticent withal, that we have hardly the means of forming a proper estimate of their character. We must content ourselves, therefore, with a simple outline of their course.

A quiet and semi-confidential proposal for amendment was made by Ferdinand and Isabella of Spain to Pope Alexander VI. Their Ferdinand and Isabella, 1498. majesties proceeded with great care and circumspection in this delicate business, directing their ambassador, "El pache soprior de Santa Cruz," to broach the subject cautiously to Henry VII. of England. The original memorandum for his instruction in the matter still exists. "Knowing his good will, and how good, and Christian, and Catholic king he is, and how much zeal he has for the things of God and the Church, it seems to us," their majesties say, "that we ought to communicate with him in this so very important affair,

very privately by you, and by no other person, in order to learn his mind upon it."

Ferdinand and Isabella express their "esteem and affection" for "the most Holy Father," and their "desire to do for him" all the good in their power, "being the Vicar of Jesus Christ;" but they represent that he is "too forward to do very extravagant things, and this by other means than he ought to employ." "He sells all the benefices that are vacated, to purchase estates for *his sons* (his Holiness was not married), and obstructs the reformation of the monasteries in our realm, and more still the reformation of the Church of Rome, by deeds contrary to what the Vicar of Jesus Christ should do, very scandalous and of bad example to all Christendom. It grieves us much." "Although our entreaties have not as yet availed, we believe that his Holiness, seeing we were joined in it by some of the other princes, will, through apprehension, do that which he ought to do." Accordingly, the "memorandum" suggests a plan to work upon the fears of his Holiness for his moral correction and improvement.*

The sub-prior, writing from England to Ferdinand and Isabella, July 18th, 1498, says that he spoke to the king alone on the subject. Henry VII. said that he was very glad to be informed about a cause of such great importance as that concerning the zeal of the Christian princes. His opinion is, that they have not demanded too much from a Pope

* Carta á los reyes D'Fernando yda Isabél de su Embajador en Roma en 1498. San Sebastian, imprenta de Ignacio Ramon Baroja, 1842. Edited by C. Wiffen.

for whom they have done so much. He thinks it advisable to send one more person, *who is exempt from all vice and blemish*, as ambassador to the Pope, to request him to do what they desire. If he refuse it, they have not only a right to do what they say, but also convoke a council if necessary.

The sub-prior took the opportunity to mention that there were at that time in England and Flanders many heretics, who had come from Spain, who speak ill of Spain, and wish to excite hatred against her. Henry appreciated this information much. He laid his hands on his breast, and swore, by the "faith of his heart," that if any one (without mentioning those cursed exiles) of his best-beloved subjects should say anything against the King and Queen of Spain, he would not esteem him, or any longer treat him as his friend. He promised to punish soundly any Jew or heretic to be found in his realms.* The sub-prior conversed a long time with the king on the subject.

The reformation sought by Ferdinand and Isabella was simply to mitigate public scandal. Accustomed as they were to attend the *auto-da-fé*, and to witness the tortures inflicted upon the victims of persecution, it is certain that they had no idea of a radical change. It does not appear that their gentle pressure had much effect on his Holiness, who is described as "a monster who might vie with the Neros and Caligulas of ancient Rome." His bestial propensities were horrible. Indulging himself in the excesses of vice, Alexander VI. was the more inclined to accommodate his fellow delinquents

* Bergénroth, i, 164.

throughout Popedom. He granted a plenary indulgence, the tariff of which was on a graduate scale, to meet the convenience of purchasers.

The papal document extending this benefit to the subjects of Henry VII. is curious, but too tedious to be cited at length. It is entitled, "The Articles of the Bull of the holy jubilee of full remission of great joy granted to the realm of England, Wales, Ireland, Gernessy and Garnesey, and all other places under the subjection of our Sovereign Lord, King Henry the Seventh, to the true meaning of our Holy Father, unto the king's subjects, by the hands of his dear and well-beloved William Butts, student in the University of Cambridge."* The Holy Father grants to William Butts

Bull of
indulgence,
1501.

"His said commissary, and his deputies, to choose and assign confessors and penitentiaries, secular and regular, in all such places as shall please the said commissary or his deputies, to hear the confessions of all such as are disposed to receive the pardon of our holy jubilee; the which confessors and penitentiaries shall have the same authority and power in every behalf which the penitentiaries of Rome had at Rome in the year of grace; that is to say, they shall absolve of all manner of crimes, trespasses, transgressions, and sins, whatsoever they be, though the absolution be reserved to the court of Rome, or to the Pope himself; nothing except but such as except to the penitentiaries of Rome, and that allonely the absolution of conspirators in the person of our Holy Father the Pope, or in the state of the see of Rome."

In this circumstantial and exact legal form his Holiness offers a clean conscience to the vilest offenders. The tariff is too extended and minute for recital. But to give an idea of the pardon market we quote the first and last items:—

* Chron. and Mem. of Great Britain; Letters and Papers of Richard III. and Henry VII., vol. ii. 93, *seq.*

"Tax what every man shall put into the chest that will receive this great grace of their jubilee. First, every man and woman, what degree, condition, or state soever they be, if it be an archbishop, duke, or any other dignity, ^{Tariff of} Indulgence. spiritual or temporal, having lands or tenements, or rents amounting to the yearly value of 2,000 li., or above, must pay, or cause to be paid to this holy intent and effect, for defence of our faith against the most great and cruel enemy of the same, the Turk, if they will receive great indulgence and grace of this jubilee for themselves, their wives, and their children not married, and effectually, without fraud or deceit, put into the chest ordained for that intent, of true and lawful money current in that country where they be, *three pounds six shillings and eight pence.*

"*Item.* Those whose goods movcable extendeth not to the value of xx. li., shall pay for themselves, wife, and children, as it shall please them of their devotion. Also the said commissary hath power to compound, absolve, and dispense with all those that occupy evil gotten goods—all usurers—and all such that wrongfully occupieth men's goods, first making composition for the same commissary of some certain sum of money to be spent in the foresaid use; that is to say, for the relief and defence of our faith against the most cruel and most bitter enemy of the same, the Turk. Also, if there be any willing to be created doctor in both laws, or in the one of them, the said commissary hath full power to do it as if he were create in any university."*

The image of the Papacy is perfectly reflected in this characteristic document. The thief might be confirmed in his possession of stolen property, on condition that his Holiness might share the booty. For a certain pecuniary consideration vows might be broken with impunity, whilst offenders of every class, by dropping the gold or silver coins into the chest of the pardoner, might walk abroad with the freedom and credit of persons of stainless virtue; and the most stupid and illiterate might gratify their vanity by titles of academic distinction. We cannot

* MS. Cott. Cleop., E. iii., fol. 1576.

wonder that Ferdinand and Isabella found his Holiness so incorrigible. The first word, we are told, of Pius III., the successor of Alexander VI. (1503), was "reformation," but he died in twenty-six days. 1503.

Julius II., who next occupied the papal throne, was denounced by the Council of Pisa (1511—1512) and suspended, but with no practical improvement. This turbulent reign was followed by that of the "intellectual sensualist" Leo X. A company of candidates for the "red hat" also made a small attempt at reformation. "We find mention of an oratory of Divine Love, which a few distinguished men of Rome had established for their common edification. In the Church St. Silvestro and St. Dorotea, in the Trastevere, not far from the spot where St. Peter was *thought* to have lived, and to have presided over the first meetings of Christians, they assembled for divine worship, preaching, and spiritual exercises. They met to the number of fifty, or sixty. Contarini, Sadolet, Giberto, Caraffa, all of whom afterwards became cardinals, Gætano de Thiene, who was canonized; Lippomano, a theological writer of great reputation and influence, and some other celebrated men, were amongst them. Giuliano Balbi, the priest of that Church, served as the centre of the circle."* These meetings arose from a strong desire to oppose some resistance to the common degeneracy. Part of this society met subsequently in Venice. Cardinal Pole joined them. He is said to have held the doctrine of justification

Oratory of
Divine
Love.

* Ranke, i. 186.

by faith. He kept silent, however, when to speak might become the occasion of personal inconvenience, for he was of opinion that a man should be satisfied with his own inward convictions, without troubling himself greatly whether errors and abuses exist in the Church." Adrian VI. (1522), in his brief career, seemed to promise something better. "We know," he said, in the instructions he gave to the Nuncio Cheregato, "that for a long time many abominations have existed near the Holy See; abuses of spiritual things, excess in the exercise of authority. Every thing has been turned to evil. From the head the corruption has spread into the members—from the Pope to the prelates; we have all gone astray; there is none of us that hath done well—no not one."*

Proposed
reform.
Adrian VI.
1522.

It was easier, however, to make a confession of the existing evils than to find a practical remedy. "At every step," says Ranke, "the Pope saw himself beset by a thousand difficulties. He found himself in a new element which he could not master, because he was not acquainted with it, and did not understand the secret springs of its existence." He pondered the mysterious evils around him, and then fell into a state of profound stupor.

The weak and treacherous Clement VII. (1523), only exposed the Papacy to the bitterest contempt.

1523.

Gaspar Contarini, in the following reign, urged the necessity of change. "A Pope ought to know," he said, "that those over whom he exercises authority are free men. He ought

Contarini's
proposition.

* Rainald, tom. xx. ad. an. 1522, n. 66.

not to command, or forbid, or dispense, according to his own pleasure, but according to the rule of reason, of the divine commandments of love; a rule which refers everything to God and to the common good." He induced Paul III. to appoint a commission to consider a scheme of Church reform. His sanguine expectations were not realized. The evil was too deeply rooted to be removed by a plan devised at the court of Rome.

Roman Catholic writers of eminence have no alternative but to admit the necessity that existed for reformation. "Some years," says Bellarmine, "before the use of the Lutheran and Calvinistic heresy, according to the testimony of those that were then alive, there was almost an entire abandonment of equity in the ecclesiastical judgments, in morals no discipline, in sacred literature no erudition, in divine things no reverence; religion was almost extinct."*

The need of reformation.
Bellarmine's testimony.

Mézeray gives the following explicit statement: "As the heads of the Church paid no regard to the maintenance of discipline, the vices and excesses of the ecclesiastics grew up to the highest pitch, and were so public and universally exposed, as to excite against them the hatred and contempt of the people. We cannot repeat without a blush the usury, the avarice, the gluttony, the universal dissoluteness of the priests of this period, the licence and debauchery of the monks, the pride and extravagance of the prelates, and the shameful indolence, ignorance, and superstition pervading the whole body. These were not, I confess, new scandals; I

Mézeray.

* Concio, xxviii.; Opp. vi. 296.

should rather say that *the barbarism and ignorance of preceding centuries, in some sort, concealed such vices; but on the subsequent revival of the light of learning, the spots which I have pointed out became more manifest*, and as the unlearned who were corrupt could not endure the light through the pain which it caused to their eyes, so neither did the learned spare them, turning them to ridicule, and delighting to expose their turpitude and to decry their superstitions.”*

LAURENTIUS VALLA (1406—1457) was one of the first of the Humanists who turned his learning to account in exposing the literary frauds of the Papacy. In 1440 he wrote his work entitled “*Declamatio de falso credita et ementita Constantini Donatione.*” Wycliffe was condemned at the Council of Constance for condemning the supposed grant of Constantine. Dante had admitted the authenticity of the document. Valla now proved it to be a myth, from evidence that could not be invalidated. He was in Rome soon after the work excited attention, and deemed it prudent to flee to Ostia and Naples, and even to go in disguise to Barcelona. Feeling himself secure, however, under the protection of King Alfonso, the antagonist of Pope Eugenius IV., he returned to Naples and renewed his attacks. The letter purporting to be addressed by Christ to Agabus, he declared to be a forgery, and denied that such a person as Agabus ever existed. He rendered further service by developing the laws of a true Latinity, and was induced by the artistic refinement it produced, to pronounce

Laurentius
Valla, 1457.

* Abregé Chronol. viii. 691.

the scholastic style absurd. He prepared the way by his philological knowledge for the proper examination of the text of the New Testament.

Hutten.

ULRICH VON HUTTEN, with others, exposed the follies and vices of the monks so successfully in their own dog-Latin, that the Dominicans themselves joined in circulating the book, though they afterwards hurled their anathemas against it in vain.

The cautious reformers associated with ERASMUS next claim our attention. At the close of the fifteenth century, several English scholars visited Italy, to enjoy the advantages afforded by a prolonged residence in the universities. THOMAS LINACRE, WILLIAM GROCYN, and WILLIAM LATIMER, shared the patronage of Lorenzo de Medici at Florence, under Polibran, and studied at Padua and at Rome. On their return to England, they began to teach in the universities. Incidentally we find their names frequently mentioned in connection with the advancement of learning, but none of them so prominently as those of Colet, Erasmus, and More.

Associates
of Erasmus.

JOHN COLET,* the son of a wealthy baronet, on his return from Italy in 1496, gave lectures at the university of Oxford, in exposition of the epistles of St. Paul; and when appointed subsequently to the deanery of St. Paul's, he delivered a series of expository discourses on the "gospel history"—the Apostles' Creed, and the Lord's Prayer, avoiding as far as possible the discussion of theological questions. The cathedral at

Colet.

* Seebohm, Oxford Reformers.

that time was a place of public resort, and all classes seem to have been interested in the preaching of the dean. The Lollards were pleased with his frequent allusions to Christ. Henry VIII. was delighted with the freshness and vigour of his style, and scholars liked the freedom with which he handled points of biblical criticism. His character, moreover, commanded general respect.

The position of Colet, nevertheless, was one of difficulty. He was intent on the promotion of learning, and greatly absorbed in its pursuit. His munificence, in founding St. Paul's schools, was not universally appreciated. Within a certain range only, with personal safety, could he exercise ministerial fidelity; and he felt it to be his wisdom, under all circumstances, to keep within due limits.

In his sermon before convocation, in 1512, he exposed freely the corruption of the priests. He selected for his text the words of the apostle (Romans xii. 2), "Be ye not conformed to this world: but be ye reformed in the newness of your minds, that ye may prove what is the good, and well-pleasing, and perfect will of God." "The conformation," said the preacher, "consists chiefly in these four evils—viz., in *devilish pride*, in *carnal concupiscence*, in *worldly covetousness*, and in *worldly occupations*. These things are in the world; these things are also in the *Church*, and they *reign* in the Church, and amongst ecclesiastical persons. We can very truly say, all things that are in the Church, are either the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, or the pride of life."

The dean, continuing his discourse, illustrated

these particulars by a free enumeration of the vices of the clergy, and closes his public indictment in the following terms : “ In these times, we experience much opposition from the laity, but they are not so hurtful to us, as we are to ourselves. Nor does their opposition do us so much hurt as the opposition of our own wicked lives, which are opposed to God and to Christ ; for He said, ‘ He who is not with me, is against me.’ We are troubled, in these days, by heretics—men, mad with strange folly ; but this heresy of theirs is not so pestilential and pernicious to us and the people, as the *vicious and depraved lives of the clergy.*”

For the reformation of these enormous abuses, and the correction of the prevailing evils, Colet simply proposed the more stringent enforcement of the canon law ! In conclusion, he said : “ These reverend fathers, and *most distinguished men*, are the things that I thought to speak of, concerning the reformation of the clergy. I trust, that, in your clemency, you will take them in good part. If, by chance, I *should seem to have gone too far in this sermon*—if I have said anything with too much warmth, forgive it me, and pardon a man speaking out of zeal, a man sorrowing for the ruin of the Church, and *passing by any foolishness of mine*, consider the thing itself. Consider the miserable state and condition of the Church, and bend your whole minds to its reformation. Suffer not, fathers, suffer not this *so illustrious an assembly* to break up without result ; suffer not this your congregation to slip by for nothing. Ye have, indeed, often been assembled ; *but if, by your leave, I may speak the*

truth, I see not what fruit has as yet resulted, especially to the Church, from assemblies of this kind! Go now, in the spirit to whom you have prayed, that He would give you his assistance, and endeavour to consider to ordain, and to decree those things which may be useful to the Church, and redound to your praise, and the honour of God, to whom, be all honour and glory, for ever and ever. Amen."

With perfect nonchalance, the convocation passed over the question of their own reformation, and gave themselves to the work of extirpating what they called heresy. Bishop Fitzjames, who had sent so many conscientious, and earnest Christian people to the stake, contended for the right to burn heretics, from the words of Paul to Titus, as given in the Vulgate: *Hæreticum hominem post unam et alteram correptionem devita!*" "*Devita,*" said the fanatical prelate, is derived from "*de vita,*" being "*de vita tollere.*"

Colet mentioned this incident to his friend Erasmus, but it was not suffered to transpire, until Colet and Fitzjames were both dead.

Colet, in common with many of his contemporaries, saw the abominations of the Church of Rome; but we find neither in his correspondence nor general writings, any distinct recognition of a really reforming principle. The exigencies of his vocation made him afraid to go too far. As it was, the denunciation of the flagitious practices of his clerical brethren, exposed him to the charge of heresy, and but for the gracious protection of Henry VIII., his life would have been in danger. He kept his place with prudent care.

In 1515, Colet took a conspicuous part in the

grand procession, mustered in honour of Cardinal Wolsey's "red hat." He preached, on the occasion, in Westminster Abbey. "Cardinals," he said in his sermon, "represent the order of Seraphim, continually beaming with love to God, the Blessed Trinity, for which reason they are arrayed in the colour that denotes nobleness." After this humiliating exhibition, poor Colet withdrew into the country to take care of his mother. His amiability shines out in his letters to his friend Erasmus, and we may indulge the hope that he saw more of the truths of Christianity than he had courage openly to teach.

Procession
of the
"Red Hat,"
1515.

"Light" came to him at "eventide." In a letter to the Abbot of Winchcombe, he says: "Christ was promised by the prophets; Christ is both God and man; through Christ there is a resurrection both of the soul and of the body. Oh, Erasmus," he writes, in his last letter, "of books and of knowledge there is no end. There is no better way for *us*, in this short life, than to live holily and purely; to make it our daily care, to become more pious and enlightened and perfect, which these 'Pythagorean,' and 'Cabalistica,' of Reuchlin promise to make us; but in my opinion, there is no other way for us to attain this, than by the earnest love and imitation of Jesus. Wherefore, leaving these endless mysteries, let us go the short way to work. I long for strength to do so. Farewell. *From London, 1517.*"*

Light at
eventide.

1517.

The famous sermon of Colet seems to have made

* Herald's Coll.; Fiddes' Coll. 251; Camb. Univ. Lib. MSS. Gg. 4. 26, p. 62; Knight.

after all, some impression on the mind of Archbishop Warham, though its fruit was rather slow in its appearance.

In 1518, the primate was prepared to propose certain measures of reform. He summoned his suffragans and clergy to meet him at Lambeth, there to hold a synod, for the purpose of adopting plans of reformation. He expected that Wolsey, as Archbishop of York, would convene the clergy of the northern province. But there was no "seraphic" virtue in the "red hat" to prompt him to zeal in a work of this kind. The heat the cardinal manifested on the occasion, was rather that of proud displeasure.

In a letter to Warham from "York House, 1518," Wolsey says: "To my no little marvel, I have seen the copy of such monitions as you have directed to your suffragans, commanding them by the same to repair to Lambeth, where you intend to keep a great council with them, for the reformation of great enormities, expressed in your said monitions, and committed through your province." The cardinal then, in bitter terms, reproves the primate for his officiousness, and adds: "Necessary it shall be that forthwith you do repair to me." "I intend to be at Richmond eight or ten days from thence; your place at Mortlake is not far distant, where you may for the time right easily and pleasantly be lodged, and we both, with little pain, often repair together, as the case shall require."*

The two archbishops met, and a synod was

* Wilkins, iii. 660.

appointed in the name of the legate; but when the clergy assembled a plague broke out, and the business was adjourned.

From a letter of Fox, Bishop of Winchester, to Wolsey, we find a return to the question. The bishop says it is a great consolation to him Fox on
reform. that *the cardinal has appointed an early day to commence a reformation of the whole clergy.* He desires to see this day as Simeon desired to see the Messiah; and since he read Wolsey's letters he feels assured that he shall see a more complete reformation of the whole English hierarchy than he could ever hope for in this age. He said he had endeavoured to do within his own small jurisdiction what Wolsey has resolved upon in both the provinces of England; but, though he has given all his study to it for nearly three years, when he had to correct and punish, he found the clergy, and particularly (what he did not at first suspect) the monks, so depraved, so licentious and corrupt, that he has despaired of any perfect reformation in his own diocese. He has known, he adds, by experience that whatever Wolsey undertakes he will do; and such is his skill in divine and human affairs, and his authority with king and Pope—of which the fame has spread over the world—that he will undoubtedly achieve by this reformation a fame greater than that of all preceding legates.

This prophetic dream was not fulfilled. Wolsey suppressed some of the smaller monasteries, but he had neither the disposition nor the courage to attempt a real work of reformation.

ERASMUS held the chief place among the inter-

mediate reformers. His character and course still remain a sort of historical enigma. He Erasmus. received his early education at Deventer; and though in after life he complained of the treatment he received from his teachers, he acquired from the school a classical taste, and the habits of study that fitted him for his subsequent literary pursuits.

His training in youth was not adapted for the formation of settled religious principles. Against his personal inclination, and from the His early training. mercenary motives of his relatives, he was forced into a monastery, and witnessed much in the conduct of the monks that excited his extreme disgust. "Monastic institutions," he said, "were places of impiety rather than of religion, where everything was done to which a depraved inclination could lead—and that under the mask of piety—and where it was hardly possible for any one to keep himself pure and undefiled."

At the age of twenty-three years Erasmus was transferred by the superior, after five years of monastic imprisonment, to the care of the Leaves the monastery, 1492. Archbishop of Cambray, to render him some service in Latinity, and in 1492 he took priest's orders. He expected to accompany the archbishop to Rome, but in this he was disappointed, and for six years he kept closely to his books. As his desire for classical attainments increased, he became anxious to be relieved from his monastic vows. He had no desire for the work of a priest, and it was a source of perpetual annoyance to him to be compelled to wear the monastic habit. Desire to be relieved of the monastic habit.

"It so happened," he says, "that I had to go, for the prosecution of my studies, to distant parts. There, after the French fashion, I thought it necessary to don a small linen toga over my vest. For this I twice ran imminent risk of my life. In that country the doctors who attend cases of the plague wear a white linen garment on their left shoulder, which hangs before and behind them, that all may know them, and be on their guard; indeed, they are assailed with stones if they walk in the thoroughfares. Well, I had gone on a visit to a learned friend, when two horse-guards, or black guards, rushed upon me with drawn swords, and a murderous shout, and would have made an end of me, but for a good woman who was passing, and convinced them I was an ecclesiastic, and not a doctor. Another day, paying a visit to a fellow-countryman, a sudden onslaught was made upon me with clubs and stones, and the cry raised, 'Down with the dog! Kill him outright.' Upon this a young man came forward. 'Take my word for it,' said he, 'if you do not discard that linen toga, you will be stoned alive one of these days. I have warned you, so take care.' Unwilling to lay the article aside altogether, I concealed it under my coat."

"You may say, Why did I not at once adopt the dress out and out of the fraternity? That, however, would have been no joke. With one hand you have to hold up the flowing tail of a train, and with the other to balance a hood of manifold and portentous magnitude. Besides, I had to travel from one country to another on business, and one looks such an odd fish in that dress. The whole affair ended in my friends advising me to get a dispensation from the Pope for throwing off the vestments altogether."*

His Holiness accommodated the witty scholar, and relieved him from sacerdotal responsibilities.

On leaving Cambray, Erasmus entered Montague College, in the university of Paris. "Here, too, he was not happy: he was compelled to attend Scotist lectures and disputations; and he complains that the unwholesome food and bad wine on which he was forced to live, had entirely destroyed his health. But in the mean-

At the
University
of Paris.

* Ep. 81.

while, he had come to a consciousness of his own powers. While yet a boy, he had lighted upon the first trace of a new method of study, and he now followed it up, with slender aid from without, but with the infallible instinct of genuine talent. He had constructed for himself a light, flowing style, formed on the model of the ancients—not by a servile imitation of particular expressions, but in native correctness and elegance far surpassing anything which Paris had to offer. He now emancipated himself from the fetters which bound him to the convent and the schools, and boldly trusted to the art of which he was master for the means of subsistence.”* He escaped the dreariness of his lot on making the acquaintance of Lord Mountjoy in Holland, during a temporary rest from his studies.

Visit to
England,
1497.

At the instance of his noble friend and patron, he visited England in 1497, and devoted himself to the study of Greek at Oxford, under Grocyn. He was also introduced to Colet, who became one of his best friends. He tried to obtain the means of support by teaching, but with only partial success; for he could never master the English language, and his pupils found in him a very imperfect interpreter. His lectures,

Visit to
Italy.

for the same reason, probably, were equally unremunerative. By the help of friends he obtained sufficient money to visit Italy, and by his writings he gained considerable celebrity. Ultimately he resolved to devote himself to the task of preparing an edition of the Greek Testament that should commend itself

Edition of
the Greek
Testament.

* Ranke.

for accuracy to scholars. Following in the track of Laurentius Valla, he maintained that it was not safe to adhere to the Vulgate. Amidst all his wanderings and eccentricities, his purpose to accomplish this object was unwavering. 1505.

Writing to his friend from Paris in 1505, he says :

“I cannot tell you, dearest Colet, how, by hook and by crook, *I struggle to devote myself to the study of Sacred Literature* ; how I regret everything which either delays me or detains me from it. But constant ill fortune has prevented me from extricating myself from these misfortunes. When in France, I determined that if I could not conquer these difficulties I would cast them aside ; and that, once free from them, with my whole mind I would set to work at these sacred studies, and devote the rest of my life to them. Although, three years before, I had attempted something on Paul's Epistle to the Romans, and had completed four volumes at one pull, I was nevertheless prevented from going on with it, owing chiefly to the want of a better knowledge of Greek. Consequently, for nearly these three years past, I have buried myself in Greek literature ; nor do I think the labour has been thrown away. I began, also, to dip into Hebrew ; but, deterred by the strangeness of the words, I desisted, knowing that one man's life and genius are not enough for too many things at a time.” *

On his return to England in 1505—6, Erasmus found himself in a circle of congenial friends, amongst whom were Colet, More, Grocyn, Linacre, Wolsey, and Warham. His ex-uberant wit, ripe learning, fluent tongue, and facile pen made him welcome to all who could freely communicate with him in Latin—the tongue which seems to have been to him sufficiently plastic for all purposes of oral or written discourse. His person was small, with light hair, half-closed eyes, full of acute observation, and humour playing

Return to
England,
1505—6.

* Ep. 102.

about his delicate mouth. His air was so timorous that he looked as if a breath would overthrow him.

- He appears to have been the common favourite in the higher circles of rank and learning, and the Circle of friends. attentions he received gave him almost unbounded licence in the expression of his personal feelings and wishes. He could ask for all he wanted, and almost in any terms. An amusing companion, and a pleasant correspondent, and yet a prodigious literary worker, he became the pivot of intellectual communication for the scholars and patrons of learning throughout Europe. Henry VIII. and the King of France wrote letters in his praise to the Pope. His Holiness in turn wrote to assure him that he should take the first opportunity to show him substantial favour. Cardinal Wolsey was his "sheet-anchor," and made "many loving inquiries about him." Tunstal was glad to find that he was on "good terms with the theologians of Louvain." He was admired, flattered, and to the same extent morally enfeebled.

With all the attentions he received, he was miserably dependent, and we find him not unfrequently Miserable dependence. reduced to the greatest straits. He was offered a bishopric at the recommendation of the King of France, but the proposition was so ridiculous that it only caused him merriment. He declined an appointment from the "King Catholic" that might have secured him a regular income, but he could not leave his desk. Generous as was his friend Colet, he could not meet the demands of the needy scholar. Archbishop Warham sent him

“twenty angels” to cure his cough. Lord Mountjoy and many others contributed to his necessities; but on some account he was always on the verge of penury.

He complains that he cannot find decent accommodation. “Even Linacre,” he said, “who knew that he was leaving London with no more than six angels, and his health indifferent, urged him not to apply to the archbishop or Mountjoy, but habituate himself to poverty.” He could do this, he added, when in health, but now “he must beg to save his life.”

Sometimes, however, he writes in the most exalted strain of boasting of the large amount of patronage he enjoys:—

“When I was in Italy,” he says in one of his epistles, “the king wrote me with his own hand a very friendly letter; and now he speaks of me in a most honourable and affectionate manner. Every time that I salute him he embraces me most freely, and looks kindly upon me, and it plainly appears that he not only speaks, but thinks well of me. The queen has expressed a desire that I should become her preceptor. Every one knows that if I would but live a few months at court, the king would give me as many benefices as I could desire; but I esteem all things less than the leisure I enjoy, and the labours and studies in which I am occupied. The Archbishop of Canterbury, primate of England and Chancellor of the kingdom, a learned and worthy man, loves me as though he were my father or my brother; and to show you the sincerity of his friendship, he has given me a living worth about a hundred nobles, which, at my request, he hath since changed for a pension of a hundred crowns upon my resignation. Within these few years he has given me more than four hundred nobles without asking. One day he gave me a hundred and fifty. From the liberality of other bishops I have received more than a hundred.”

It was understood by all these royal and noble

patrons that he was at liberty to sting the schoolmen and the monks. He assailed them with the keenest satire. They were helpless and bewildered, for they had no corresponding weapons of learning or of wit to defend themselves or to return the assault on their sleepless antagonist. The friends of the new learning richly enjoyed their confusion :—

Licence to
sting the
schoolmen
and monks.

“We are making preparations,” he says, “for a war against the Turks, with what view soever this be undertaken. If we should conquer them, it is to be supposed (for we shall hardly put them to the sword) that attempts will be made to bring them over to Christianity. Shall we then put into their hands an Occam, a Durandus, a Scotus, a Gabriel, or an Alvarus? What will they think of us (for after all they are rational creatures)? What will they think when they hear of our intricate and perplexed subtleties concerning instants, formalities, quiddities, and relations? What, when they observe our quibbling professors so little of a mind, that they may dispute together till they turn pale with fury, call names, spit in one another’s faces, and even come to blows? What, when they behold the Jacobins fighting for their Thomas, and the Minorites for their most refined and seraphic doctors, and the Nominalists and the Realists each defending their own jargon, and attacking that of their adversaries.”

“Tell me, I beseech you, what effects will all this produce, when they shall find our lives no better than our divinity, and observe our tyranny, our ambition, our avarice, our rapaciousness, our lust, our debauchery, our cruelty, and our oppressions? With what front shall we dare to recommend to them the doctrine of our Saviour, so directly contrary to our behaviour? The most efficacious way of gaining them would be to approve ourselves the servants and imitators of Jesus Christ; and to convince them that we covet neither their lands nor their money, nor their wives nor their daughters, but only desire their salvation and the glory of our Lord and Master. This is the true and powerful theology which formerly subjected to Jesus Christ that pride of philosophers and the sceptre of

princes; and He Himself will aid us when we begin to act thus."*

Erasmus did not spare the dronish and ignorant monks:—

"Their religion," he says, "consists, for the most part, of their title, and yet they think that they have worked so many works of supererogation that one heaven can never be reward enough for their meritorious life, little thinking that Christ, at the last day, shall put all their works aside and ask only whether they have fulfilled his own single precept with charity. Then will one brag that he has fed only upon fish; another that he has done nothing but sing psalms; a third will tell how many thousand fasts he has kept; another will plead that for threescore years he has never so much as touched a piece of money without protecting his fingers from pollution by a double cloth; another shall glory in having for seventy-five years lived like a sponge fixed to one spot; another shall answer that his voice is hoarse with incessant singing; another that his tongue has grown stiff with long silence. But Christ, putting a stop to their never-ending self-glorification, shall answer, I told you plainly in my gospel, that my Father's kingdom was promised not to cowl or habits, vigils or fastings, but to the practice of charity. I cannot own such as think so much of their own deeds, as if they were holier than I. Let those who prefer their own traditions to my precepts go and occupy the empyrean heavens, or order new ones to be built for them; when the monks shall hear these things, and see sailors and waggoners preferred to themselves, what grimaces, think you, will they not make?"†

Notwithstanding all that might have a tendency to divert his mind, Erasmus held steadily on in his work of preparing a more correct version of the New Testament, accompanied with a Latin translation. He clearly understood his ground in this undertaking, and defended himself against all objections and assailants with entire success.

* Jortin, i. 128.

† Morinæ Encomium.

The first edition of Erasmus's Greek Testament appeared in 1516. It excited very different feelings in the various parties of the time. Colet, writing to Erasmus, says: "In me it excites mingled feelings. At one time I rejoice in that light which you have set forth from the sun of your own genius; at another time I am seized with sorrow that I, too, have not the knowledge of Greek, without which one is good for nothing."

First edi-
tion of
Greek
Testament,
1516.

Latimer (William), now professor of Greek at Cambridge, expressed his hearty approval of the version; so did Archbishop Warham and the Bishop of Winchester; yet at Cambridge the dominant party in the university was opposed to the work. It was interdicted in one of the colleges, and led by a Franciscan friar, a society was formed to discover and expose the errors it might contain; but Sir Thomas More says: "They find the work of reading more laborious than that of begging; so they have left it off, and are gone back to mendicancy."

The same diversity of feeling was shown on the continent. At Louvain and Cologne bitter hostility was displayed, but the scholars of Europe, as a whole, hailed the work with delight. PHILIP MELANTHON sent a tribute of verses to Erasmus, and Leo X. wrote to him a letter of thanks.

Erasmus did more than render this service to scholars. He claimed for the people the right of reading the Scriptures in their own tongue:—

"I utterly dissent," he says, "from those who are unwilling that the sacred Scriptures should be read by the unlearned, translated into their vulgar tongue, as though Christ had taught such

subtleties that they can scarcely be understood even by a few theologians, or as though the strength of the Christian religion consisted in men's ignorance of it. The mysteries of kings it may be safer to conceal, but Christ wished his mysteries to be published as soon as possible. I wish that even the weakest woman should read the epistles of Paul, and I wish these were translated into all languages, so that they might be read and understood not only by Scots and Irishmen, but also by Turks and Saracens. To make them understood is surely the first step. It may be that they might be ridiculed by many, but some would take them to heart. *I long that the husbandman should sing portions of them to himself as he follows the plough, that the weaver should hum them to the tune of his shuttle, that the traveller should beguile with their stories the tedium of his journey.*" *

Claims for
the people
the right
to read the
Scriptures.

If the much-needed reformation could have been effected by learning, wit, or semi-diplomatic influence, and yet without the sacrifice of friendship or of personal credit, then Erasmus would have been the foremost leader, and the most influential. But the work required was of far different character. Even Luther, as we shall shortly see, trembled almost at the sound of his own voice when he began in earnest the momentous controversy. Erasmus shrank instinctively from a struggle which was not at all to his taste and far beyond his strength. "How can ye believe," said the Saviour to his disciples, "who receive honour one of another, and seek not the honour which cometh from God only?"

Defects of
Erasmus as
a leader.

The path opened to the enlightened and consistent Christian, in the times of Erasmus, was one in which he must in order to fidelity part company with the noble, the wise of this world—the rich and the powerful, and exercise a trust in the Unseen

* Preface to Erasmus' Paraphrase.

Leader that would enable him to renounce all confidence in man. The faith of Erasmus was not of this commanding order. At every step he might wish to take in the course of simple Christian duty, he was held back by some new fear, and vexed with his own vacillation. Yet unable to advance, ever seeking some poor expedient to conceal his want of courage and to excuse his inconsistency, he was driven helplessly as a leaf in the storm, when he might have breasted its fury, and led the way to safety and abiding peace.

There is no need for any formal delineation of the character of Erasmus. He has opened his heart as far as possible to all the world, in his Self poured out. as far as possible to all the world, in his immense and varied correspondence. In one of his off-hand epistles, we see the man far more clearly than in any fancy sketch of the greatest "word-painter" that could be named. Writing to Luther, in 1519, he says: "For my part, I keep clear of all party, with a view to be of as much service as I can in the revival of literature. And I think one does more good by civility and moderation than by violence. In that way Christ has brought mankind under his government; in that way St. Paul abrogated the Jewish ritual. It is better to complain of those who abuse the authority of the pontiffs themselves; and I would make the same remark respecting kings. We may argue as strongly as we can against notions that have long prevailed, but we should never contradict them positively." This neutral disposition it was very difficult to maintain. As the struggle advanced, Erasmus tried to ignore Luther altogether.

Letter to
Luther,
1519.

We trespass a little beyond proper chronological order to complete our view. In a letter to Cardinal Wolsey, Erasmus says :—

“As to Luther, he is altogether unknown to me, and I have read nothing of his, except two or three pages; not because I despise him, but because my own studies and occupations did not give me leisure: and yet, as I hear, To Wolsey. there are persons who affirm that I have helped him. If he has written well, the praise belongs not to me; and if he has written ill, I ought not to bear the blame, since in all his works there is not a line that came from me. His life and conversation are universally commended.

“I was once against Luther, purely for fear lest he should bring odium upon literature, which is too much suspected of evil already, and I know full well how invidious it is to oppose those received opinions which produce so plentiful a harvest to priests and monks. Many *theses* have appeared concerning papal indulgences; then came out a book concerning confession, and another on penance; and some booksellers being disposed to reprint them, I persuaded them from it very earnestly, lest it should excite a hatred to learning.”*

Erasmus wrote kindly to Luther himself, recommending moderation. He had ventured, he said, to read his commentaries on the Psalms, and liked them much.† He suggested, moreover, to Proposes a Cardinal Campeggio that it would be ad- truce. visable for the Pope Leo X. to bring the conflicting parties together, that the questions between them might be discussed in a decent manner, in order to an amicable issue.‡ When matters became serious, Erasmus spoke of the affair as very unfortunate. “I make not myself a party,” he says, “and will be no actor in the tragedy; else a bishopric would be at my service, if I would but write against Luther.§ I am grieved to see the evangelical doctrine thus

* Ep. 317.

† Ep. 427.

‡ Ep. 499, 500.

§ Ep. 528.

oppressed, to see that we are to be compelled, and not taught, or else taught things contrary to the Holy Scriptures, and to common sense."

This did not satisfy the exasperated monks, and Erasmus was constrained to deprecate the course of Luther in terms somewhat more decided.

The German reformer felt that it was time to speak for himself, and he addressed to Erasmus the following letter of manly rebuke :—

"Grace and peace to you, from the Lord Jesus.

"I shall not complain of you for having behaved yourself as a man estranged from us, to keep fair with the Papists my enemies; nor was I much offended that, in your printed books, to gain their favour or to soften their rage, you have censured us with too much acrimony. We saw that the Lord had not conferred upon you the discernment, the courage, and the resolution to join with us, and freely and openly to oppose these monsters; and therefore we dared not to exact from you that which was greatly beyond your strength and your capacity, and honoured that portion of the gift of God which is in you." After a handsome acknowledgment of the special service rendered by Erasmus as the reviver of biblical literature, Luther continues: "I never wished that, forsaking or neglecting your own proper talents, you should enter into our camp. You might, indeed, have helped us not a little by your wit, and by your eloquence, but forasmuch as you have not that courage which is requisite, it is safer for you to serve the Lord in your own way. Only we feared lest our adversaries should entice you to write against us, and that necessity should then constrain us to oppose you to your face. We have withheld some persons amongst us who were disposed and prepared to attack you; and I could have wished that the complaint of Hutten had never been published; and still more, that your '*Spongia*,' in answer to it, had never come forth; by which you may see and feel at present, if I mistake not, Jesus Christ is my witness, that I am concerned as well as you, that the resentment and hatred of so many eminent persons has been excited against

Luther's
rebuke of
Erasmus.

you. I must suppose that this gives you no small uneasiness, for virtue like yours ; mere human virtue cannot raise a man above being affected by such trials. To tell you freely what I think, there are persons (amongst us) who, having this weakness also about them, cannot bear, as they ought, your acrimony and your dissimulation, which you want to pass off for prudence and modesty. These men have cause to be offended, and yet would not be offended, if they had more greatness of spirit. Although I also am irascible, and have been often provoked so as to use sharpness of style, yet I never acted thus, except against hardened and incurable reprobates. I have restrained myself, though you have provoked me, and I promised, in letters to my friends, which you have seen, that I would continue to do so, unless you should appear openly against us. For, although you are not of our sentiments, and many sacred doctrines are condemned by you with irreligion or dissimulation, or treated in a sceptical manner, yet I neither can nor will ascribe a stubborn perverseness to you. What can I do now ? Things are exasperated on both sides ; and I could wish, if it were possible, to act the part of a mediator between you, that they might cease to attack you with much animosity, and suffer your old age to rest in peace in the Lord ; and thus they would act, in my opinion, if they either considered your weakness, or the greatness of the controverted cause which has been long since beyond your talents. They would show their moderation toward you so much the more, since our affairs are advanced to such a point, that our cause is in no peril, although even Erasmus should attack it with all his might ; so far are we from fearing some of his strokes and strictures. On the other hand, my dear Erasmus, if you duly reflect upon your own incivility, you will abstain from those sharp and spiteful figures of rhetoric ; and if you cannot or will not defend our sentiments, you will let them alone, and treat of subjects which suit you better. Our friends, even you yourself, being judge, have some cause for anxiety at being lashed by you, because human infirmity thinks of the authority and reputation of Erasmus and fears it ; and indeed there is much difference between him and the rest of the Papists, and he is a more formidable adversary than all of them joined together." *

* Luther's Briefe, t. 2, p. 498.

Nothing shows more painfully the temporising spirit of Erasmus, than his correspondence with the martyr, Louis de Berquin. This earnest witness for the truth, translated the writings of Erasmus, and vindicated them from the imputation of heresy, by citing the testimony of the admirers of Erasmus, including the Pope himself. Erasmus interceded with Francis I. for the life of Berquin; but he reproved him for his excess of zeal. "Your intentions," he says, in a letter from Basle, August 25th, 1525, "were good, in translating into French my writings; but it has excited the hostility of the theologians against me, and, at my age, I need repose." * Erasmus desired to regulate the march of truth according to his personal convenience. He found no rest; all parties disturbed him in turn. In 1523, Pope Adrian wrote to him to the following effect:—

Conduct to
Berquin,
1525,

Adrian's in-
vitation to
Erasmus,
1523.

"Do you yet delay, Erasmus, to take in hand that man of flesh, whom God has cast out from his presence; who troubles the repose of the Church, and hurries so many wretched souls headlong into everlasting ruin? Rise, rise to the help of the cause of God. Forget not the admirable gifts you have received from the Lord; consider that He has given them to you, that you may save those whom Luther has led astray; to strengthen those whom he has staggered; and to raise those who, by him, have been cast to the ground. *What glory for your name!* What joy for the catholics! Call to remembrance the words of the Apostle James: 'If any of you do err from the truth, and one convert him; let him know that he which converteth the sinner, from the error of his way, shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins.' I cannot express to you how my heart will be filled with joy, to overflowing, if, thanks to your pen, those who have been corrupted by the poison of heresy, shall come to reflection before they are brought within the penalties of the canon law, and made to feel the stroke of the Imperial decrees.

* *Erasmii, Epistolæ Le Clerc, p. 884.*

You, whose society I have enjoyed, amidst the sweet solitude of Louvain, know how little measures of severity are suited to my nature. If you think you can accomplish this work of salvation more surely at Rome, come when the winter is over, when the air shall be cleared from the pestilential miasma by which it has been infected for some time. Come to refresh your spirit and to restore your health. All the treasures of the libraries are open to you. I invite you to our social gatherings with all the learned men we have in Rome." *

Erasmus was unequal to the proposed encounter. He was losing credit on every side.

"Very holy father," he replied, "I would gladly yield you obedience; but a tyrant, more cruel than Philares—the malady from which I suffer—must first be obeyed. The winter is gone, and the pestilence has left Rome; but the way is long, and to travel across the snowy Alps, to brave the stoves, the smell of which makes me faint, with the filthy and incommodious hostelries, and the strong wines which fly to the head. Then, the style of my writing, like my body, is blanched. Now, I have superiors, my erudition is mediocre, derived rather from the ancient writers, who are more rhetorical than polemical. Poor man, who has lost all his glory! Do you see what great weight the authority of Erasmus will have in the eyes of people, fortified with the authority of academies, princes, and of the Sovereign Pontiff himself? Fame, if she has visited me, has become cool; she has become indifferent, or changed into hate. Once, I was addressed as the 'Illustrious Hero,' the 'Prince of Letters,' the 'Star of Germany!' Now I am scarcely thought of, except to be reviled. Come to Rome. It is as if you said to the crab, fly. 'Give me wings,' replied the crab, and the crab was right." †

Declines
the call.

When the tide of reformation began to rise and swell, Erasmus anxiously watched its approach, and fearing that it would sweep away some castles he had erected on the sand, he tried in vain to arrest its onward course, by constructing a channel of his own. Its resistless advance filled him with alarm, not for the cause of truth, and the

Cowardice.

* Andin.

† Erasmi, Ep. Le Clerc, 639.

interests of the Church of God, but for the check that might be given to the progress of literature.

“Oh, that this had never been,” he wrote to Archbishop Warham. “Now there is no hope for any good. It is all over with quiet learning, thought, piety, and progress, and they accuse me of having caused it all! If I joined Luther, I could only perish with him, and I do not mean to run my neck into a halter. Popes and emperors must decide matters. I will accept what is good, and do as I can with the rest. Peace, on any terms, is better than the justest war.”

“As to me, I have no inclination to risk my life for truth. We have not all strength for martyrdom, and if trouble come, I shall imitate St. Peter. Popes and emperors must settle the creeds. If they settle them well, so much the better: if ill—I shall keep on the safe side.”

The correspondence of Erasmus with the emperor furnishes another illustration of the perplexities of his position. In a letter dated Basle, September 2nd, 1527, he writes: “Now that *the affair with Luther begins to settle down, and this partly by my labours, and at my peril*, there are persons who, instigated by their private interests, but pretending religious motives, disturb Spain—from various causes the happiest of countries—by disorderly seditions. Assuredly, I fight for Christ, and not in the interest of men. We have frequently seen very heavy storms arise which began thus: indeed, this affair of Luther’s sprung from more slender causes. But as for myself, I shall never

Perplexities
of his
position.

Corres-
pondence
with the
emperor,
1527.

cease to defend Christian piety whilst life lasts. Your Majesty will ever hold it to be your duty steadily to favour those who defend God's Church with sincerity and energy."

Charles V. replied, in a letter dated "from our city of Burgos, the 13th of December, 1527:"

"Honoured, devout, and beloved," he writes, "your letter gave us pleasure of two kinds—the one through it being yours, and the other because we learned by it that *the insanity of Lutheranism is on the wane*. You are indebted to the former to the singular good will which we entertain towards you; and as to the latter, not only we ourselves, but the whole Christian world, is indebted to you, for that you alone have achieved that which emperors, pontiffs, and princes, aided by so many of the most learned men, have hitherto failed to attain. Whence we see, and with the greatest delight, that *you cannot fail of obtaining immortal honour among men*, and eternal glory amongst those in bliss above; and from our soul we congratulate you upon this felicity. It remains for you to put forth every energy, in that field you have so successfully occupied, in order finally to subdue it. Nor will our assistance and favour ever cease to further your most pious efforts." *

In the same spirit, at a critical juncture of the Reformation at Basle, Erasmus disowned *Æcolampadius*, and recommended that the writings of the reformers should no longer be printed in the city.

These particulars belong properly to the story of the Reformation, on which we have yet to enter; but it is only by such incidents that we can form a correct estimate of the man. He could not serve two masters; or, if he made the attempt, he could not please them both. Notwithstanding the favour of the emperor, the monks hated him most bitterly, as their great tormentor. He felt keenly the misery of his position. "My troops of friends are turned

* Witten's *Life of Valdes*, pp. 36, 37.

to enemies. At dinner-tables or social gatherings, in churches and kings' courts, in public carriage or public fly-boat, scandal pursues me, and calumny defiles my name. Every goose now hisses at Erasmus; and it is worse than being stoned once for all, like Stephen, or shot with arrows, like Sebastian." *

In mercy to himself, Erasmus was called away from that motley crowd of crowned and mitred flatterers who had offered to him their blinding incense; and there is evidence that, when removed from the influences by which he had been led to conceal the truth, he turned alone to Him who is
 Testimony to Christ. "the Way, the Truth, and the Life." We hear nothing from him of patron saints or guardian angels, nothing of auricular confession or of priestly absolution—but of "Jesus only."

"Some think," he says, "that Christ is only to be found in the cloister. I think He is to be found, universal as the sun, lighting the world; He is to be found in the palaces of princes, and in the soldiers' camp; He is to be found in the trireme of the sailor, and in every pious heart. Know, therefore, thy true dignity—not acquired by thy merit, but given thee from heaven. I am speaking to thee, whether thou art a man or a woman, young or old, rich or poor, noble or ignoble, a king, a peasant, or a weaver; and I tell thee, whoever thou art, if thou art born again in Christ, thou art a king, thou art a priest, thou art a saint, thou art the temple of the living God! Dost thou gaze in wonder at a temple of marble shining with gems and gold? Thou art a temple more precious than this. Dost regard as sacred the temple that bishops have consecrated? Thou art more sacred still. Thou art anointed only with sacerdotal oil. Thou art anointed with the blood of the Immaculate Lamb: Each in his own temple.

"We must sacrifice our evil passions and our own wills, if we would at last be translated into the heavenly temple—there

* Fronde's Short Studies.

to reign with Christ, to whom be glory and thanksgiving for ever."

"I would," he said, "that all should know that I believe not less the silent word of Scripture than if Christ spoke to me at this hour with his mouth; and I doubt not less these immaterial signs, than that to which I listen with my ears, see with my eye, or touch with my hand. And as I believe that the gospel has accomplished all the types of the law, and the predictions of the prophets, I believe in the promises of the Second Coming. It is this lively faith which helps me to bear pains, injuries, sickness, old age—all the crosses of life—which illumines me, and makes me to hope in the mercy of God, and in eternal life. I think I have not willingly doubted a single word of Christ. I should prefer to die a thousand deaths than to touch an iota of the text of the gospel. In God is all my hope—in the gospel all my joy." *

Erasmus died in 1536.

Another scholar of Deventer, intimately acquainted with Erasmus, we find in the city of Antwerp, taking a more serious view than many of his contemporaries of the corruptions that existed in the Romish Church.

CORNELIUS GRAPHEUS,† the secretary of the city of Antwerp, wrote a preface to a work of Gooch on the liberty of the Christian Church, published in 1521, in which he gives a striking picture of the state of things as presented to his immediate observation:—

Cornelius
Grapheus,
1521.

"We have declined," he says, "from Christ to Moses, and backslidden from Moses to Pharaoh. We have rejected the light food of evangelical liberty, and from the quietness of the Christian life, and the repose of the gospel, have returned to the fleshpots of Egypt, and to the bondage of the brick-kilns. We have despised the easy yoke and light burden of Christ, and have betaken ourselves to the heavy load of human ordinances; giving

* Andin; Bibliothèque Impériale de Vienne, MS., n. cxc. 445. † Ullman.

attention to lying spirits, and not believing the gospel; distrusting the promises of the Saviour, but trusting in human fables. In place of the gospel we have adopted the decrees of the Pope; in place of Jesus, a certain Aristotle; in place of piety, ceremonies; and in place of truth, falsehood. We do nothing with confidence and love.

"Once we were simple-minded, purely and freely instructed in the Word of God; now we are vexed and deluded with controversies and sophisms, inferences, and distinctions. Then we acknowledged Christ alone as the foundation of our faith, our Leader, and our Head, who had promised to be with us alway, even to the end of the world; now, however, another foundation has been laid, and, in place of the celestial Leader and Head, we have set up a secular and an earthly one—yea, a sort of idol.

"*Once Christians were allowed to choose for themselves suitable pastors*; now, however—as is most deeply to be deplored—ambitious men with tyrannical power, by gifts and menaces, in right way and wrong, intrude into the spiritual office, and enter otherwise than by the door.

"Once the doctrine of Christ was common to all promiscuously, the only exception being that women were not allowed to speak in public; now, however, our masters, licentiates, and bachelors, our haughty Thomists and obscure Scotists, alone have the right to explain Scripture. As for us, they despise us, and exclude us from the kingdom, of which they claim the sole possession. 'This people,' they say, 'know not the law, and are cursed; in fact, they know nothing at all, and ought not to dispute upon theology. They never took a degree; they do not understand logic; they have not grown old in the study of Aristotle; they never saw the work of St. Thomas, or read the subtle Scotus or the unanswerable Alexander Hales; they cannot even form a syllogism; they are but painters, poets, who may perhaps write a good Latin style, but in other respects are unlettered laymen. Such persons ought not to be allowed to have the sacred Scriptures in the mother tongue, for they do not comprehend what they read, and fall into gross errors.' And yet were they not simple and illiterate laymen whom Christ called before all others into his presence, and to whom He taught his divine philosophy?

"You see then, dearest brethren in Christ, how Christianity

has sunk, and *how we have been robbed of our freedom by human traditions*. But come, all ye to whom Christian liberty is dear, as it is to me, contend for Christ, and be of good courage. Behold even now the fairest opportunity of achieving our deliverance. The sciences are being once more gradually restored; and restored once more is the gospel of Jesus, and Paul rises from the dead. For what else does the gospel breathe, or what else does St. Paul teach, and exhort, and inculcate upon us, but the liberty which is in Christ Jesus?"

Grapheus had not the courage of a martyr. He did not become a leader in the work of reformation, the necessity for which he so clearly saw. ^{Wanting in} When threatened with the penalties for ^{courage.} outspoken truth, he preserved ignominious silence, and subsided into obscurity. But the words he had uttered could not be recalled, and he was not alone in this forcible and decided testimony. Everywhere there were signs of returning animation. Prostrate humanity, long manacled and blinded in the prison-house of Popery, began to stir, and the deep-drawn sigh for deliverance was distinctly heard.

CHAPTER XI.

WE enter at length on the story of the grand conflict for religious emancipation. The preparations in Providence for the arduous and prolonged struggle were now complete, and collision between the forces of light and darkness, slowly mustered, was inevitable. The first scene in this exciting drama is one of almost oppressive stillness.

In the profound quiet of a monastic library at Erfurt, there stands a solitary reader before a chained Bible. His interest in the sacred volume has been excited by finding a copy of it incidentally when at the university in the same town. The curiosity excited in the first instance, followed by wonder, deep conviction, and great searchings of heart, has led him to make its pages the object of his constant study and deepest interest. He is now absorbed in meditation. That young Augustine monk is known in Erfurt as "Friar Martin."

We must not dwell on this view of Luther, however, as one of sentimental reverie, for from the first he was a man of action no less than of earnest enquiry. He did not fall asleep over the Bible. Every time he came to examine its contents, his convictions were strengthened, and his spiritual life was

quickened. On his removal to Wittenberg (1508—1509), he felt a strong desire to devote himself to Biblical studies. “I am well, by the grace of God,” he writes to John Braun, “were it not that I have to devote my whole energies to the study of philosophy. I have greatly desired, ever since my coming to Wittenberg, to exchange this branch for that of theology—that theology, I mean, which looks for the kernel of the nut, the albumen of the wheat, and the marrow of the bones. But God is God. Man often, nay ever, is deceived in his judgment. God is one God. He rules us with gentleness and for ever.” *

Removal to
Wittenberg,
1508—1509.

Biblical
studies.

Expository
preaching,

The wish of Luther was gratified. He was made Bachelor of Theology in March, 1509, and it became part of his duty every day at one o'clock to give an exposition of some part of the holy Scriptures. He selected for his first exercises the Psalms and the Epistle to the Romans. As he prepared for his daily task, the light broke upon his mind. The lecture attracted great attention, and more persons came to hear than could be accommodated. The voice and manner of the teacher rendered him popular, but beyond this, his deep and growing earnestness roused attention. Staupitz, the vicar-general, proposed that he should take his place in the wooden chapel of the Augustinians, which stood in the market-place. Luther hesitated awhile, but yielded to persuasion and occupied the pulpit. The royal chapel, which in turn was found too small for the crowds anxious to hear, and the

* Epp. i. 6.

Council of Wittenberg invited him to accept the appointment of town preacher, and to occupy the pulpit of the collegiate church.

In the midst of this general excitement Luther received a commission to represent seven monasteries in a case to be brought before the Pope at Rome. What he witnessed in the journey and in the city made a lasting impression on his mind. On his return to Wittenberg he resumed his studies and preached with fresh ardour. Meeting him one day under a tree in the cloister garden, Staupitz said to Luther, "*You must become a Doctor of the holy Scripture.*" Luther, in his diffidence, shrank from the idea, and raised objections. His venerable friend kindly removed them all, and encouraged him to accept the sacred trust. On the 18th of October, 1512, Luther was formally invested in the presence of a large assembly with the insignia of Doctor of Theology. He was made expressly *Biblical doctor*, and not Doctor of Sentences, and entered into a solemn engagement to preach the Scripture faithfully, to teach it purely, to study it during his whole life, and to defend it by his disputations and writings against all false doctors, so far as God should enable him. This act of solemn consecration Luther never forgot, though at the time he did not fully comprehend the nature of the service to which he was divinely called.

Melancthon tells us, "His manner of expounding the Scripture was such, that in the judgment of all enlightened and pious men, it was as if a *new day were dawning on doctrine, after a long and deep night.*"

He showed the difference between law and gospel. He refuted the error then predominant in the churches and schools which held that men merited the forgiveness of sins by their own works, and are made righteous before God by an external discipline. He recalled to the minds of men the Son of God. He made no change in ceremonies. All godly persons were charmed with the sweetness of the doctrine of the cross, and to the learned it was no less grateful. It might have been said that Christ and the apostles had come forth out of darkness, and were liberated from a loathsome dungeon."

The Saxon reformer had no plan of a spiritual campaign before him, nor any scheme in his own mind for the development and application of evangelical principles. There was an indisposition, indeed, on the part of the people to examine the Word of God for this purpose. But the occasion came in the order of Providence, and for discussions which led the men who took part in them, to recognize the truth which had long remained in the pages of revelation, almost dormant in its influence.

We have seen with what earnestness the protest was made at different times against the abuses of the Church of Rome. It was not sufficiently considered that the evil practices that prevailed arose to a great degree from *unscriptural doctrines*. Examples of their pernicious and debasing influence were forced upon the attention of Luther in the course of his ministry at Wittenberg. The doctrine of indulgences, considered merely as a speculation, may seem to be harmless, entirely unsupported by Scripture. Roman Catholic

theologians complain that the doctrine of their Church is not fairly represented. They say that in sin we must distinguish between the guilt and the punishment; the punishment is the chastisement merited by the offence—punishment eternal or temporal. The Church having the keys has the power to bind and to unloose, exercises this power with respect to sin committed after baptism, both by the sacrifice of penance and by the application of indulgence; in the sacrament of penance the Church remits sin so far as guilt is concerned and eternal punishment: but never altogether with respect to temporal punishment. By indulgence she absolves in whole or in part the temporal punishment which is due for our sins in this world, by means of our own works of satisfaction—in the world to come—by the expiation of purgatory. Indulgence, then, remits the guilt, but not the punishment. The treasure of indulgences, which belongs to the Pope and to the bishops, consists of the superabundant merits of Jesus Christ, to which are added the overabounding works of satisfaction of Mary, who never had any fault for which to atone; and those of a great number of saints who inflicted upon themselves severer acts of penance than on their own account were needful.* If, for example, St. Bridget gave herself fifty stripes for an offence in which twenty strokes would have been amply sufficient, the balance of thirty would be added to the treasury and available for a pecuniary or other stipulation, determined by the Pope, for any offender who desired for himself or his friend to abridge the term or the

* Bellarmini, lib. i. de Indulg.

degree of punishment. The system, though without the vestige of support from the Word of God, is certainly ingenious, and acting by it on the credulity, the sympathies, or the fears of her innumerable votaries, the Church of Rome has often replenished her empty treasures. So long as it is worked silently and with caution, no shock is given to the moral sense of an intelligent community, and if ignorant and misguided people are willing to tax themselves to any amount, there is no disposition on the part of others to complain. The essential immorality of the doctrine is concealed.

A Dominican friar named Tetzal, received the apostolic commission to raise money for the building of St. Peter's at Rome by the sale of indulgences, who had no regard whatever Tetzal. to the quiet propriety with which such traffic should have been carried on to avoid public scandal. On the contrary, he outraged all decency. Accompanied by a monk called Bartholomew, and two secretaries, he made a tour through several States of Germany with the most triumphant success. He entered the different towns with floating banners, bands of music, and the ringing of bells. A grand procession of priests, magistrates, and religious orders, went out to meet him; the best singers of the churches joined in the song of triumph, and the arch-impostor was conducted with lighted tapers to a throne prepared for him in the most public and central place. Before the altar was raised a large red cross, to which was attached the pontifical arms.

The Pope's bull was placed before Tetzal on a

velvet cushion, and when the vast crowd was collected, he gave his coarse and impious harangue. A chest was prepared for the reception of the money. "At the very instant," said the swindler, "that the money chinks at the bottom of the strong box, the soul escapes from purgatory, and soars to heaven."

Bartholomew, the confederate, then called out, "Buy!—Buy! Who will buy? Polygamy for etc. etc. ducats; stealing from a Church, and perjury, nine ducats; murder, eight ducats;" with certain allowances, according to the circumstances, of the purchaser.

Luther, when sitting in his confessional, 1516, found that the people had lost all concern as to absolution on ordinary terms. They produced the certificate of Tetzels, and claimed immunity for the vilest offences. Instantly Luther denounced the imposition, and the question was raised as to the "power of the keys." The excitement was immense, and spread like wild-fire. Luther, filled with indignation, wrote a letter on the "Vigil of All Saints, 1517," to Prince Albert, Archbishop of Madeberg and Mayence, Marquis of Brandenburg, etc., in which he says:—

"I have long delayed commencing the work which I now undertake with open and upraised brow, impelled by the fidelity I owe to Jesus Christ.

"Persons are now hawking about your papal indulgences, under the name and august title of your lordship, for the construction of St. Peter's at Rome. I say nothing about the declamations of the preachers, which I have not, myself, heard; but I deplore the fatal errors in which they are involving the common people; men of weak understanding, whom, foolish as they are, these men persuade that they will be sure of salvation, if they only buy

Luther in
the confes-
sional,
1516.

Letter to
Prince
Albert, 1517.

these letters of plenary indulgence. They believe that souls will fly out of purgatory the moment that the contribution is thrown into the chest, and that such virtue belongs to these indulgences; that there is no sin, howsoever great even the violation, which is impossible of the Mother of God, which the indulgences will not absolutely, and at once, efface.

“When I saw these things, I could remain silent no longer. The chiefest work of bishops should be to take care that the people learn truly the gospel, and be full of Christian charity. *Never did Christ preach indulgences, nor command them to be preached; what He preached, and commanded to be preached, was the gospel.* How horrible, then, and how perilous, for a bishop to allow the gospel to be silenced, and nothing to be heard by the people but the clamour of these indulgences.” *

Luther, in conclusion, warns the prince of the discredit that would arise, if the preachers of indulgences were allowed to proceed, and entreated that they may be silenced, at least until the propositions subjoined in the letter should be refuted.

These propositions, ninety-five in number, were affixed to the outer pillars of the church, at mid-day, on the 31st of October, 1517, with the following challenge: “From a desire to elicit the truth, the following theses will be maintained at Wittenberg, under the presidency of the Reverend Father, Martin Luther, of the order of the Augustins, Master of Arts, Master and Lecturer in Theology, who asks, that such as are not able to dispute verbally with him, will do so in writing. In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.”

Luther's
proposi-
tions, 1517.

“Finding all my remonstrances disregarded,” Luther says, “on the festival of All Saints, in November, I read in the great church of Witten-

* Epp. i. p. 86.

berg, a series of propositions against these infamous indulgences, in which, while I set forth their utter inefficiency and worthlessness, I expressly declared in my protest that I would submit, on all occasions, to the Word of God and the decisions of the Church. At the same time, I was not so presumptuous as to imagine that my opinion would be preferred above all others, nor yet so blind as to *set the fables and decrees of men above the written Word of God*. I took occasion to express these opinions, rather as subjects of doubt than of positive assertion; but I held it to be my duty to print and circulate them throughout the country for the benefit of all classes: for the learned, that they might detect inaccuracies; for the ignorant, that they might be put on their guard against the villanies of Tetzel, until the matter was properly determined."

The agitation became universal. Tetzel put forth counter-propositions, and burnt the theses of Luther publicly in the city of Frankfort.

Luther preached a sermon, in which he defended his propositions. "Even," he said, "though the Church should really declare that indulgences efface sins better than works of satisfaction, it were a thousand times fitter for a Christian not to buy them, but rather to do the work of repentance, and suffer the penalties; for indulgences are, and can be, only dispensations from good works and from salutary penalties. It were far better, and surer, to give what you can spare towards the construction of St. Peter's, than to buy the indulgences preached for that purpose. But, first of all, if you have to spare, you should

give it to your poor neighbour; that is better than to give it to raise up stone walls; and if there be no one in your neighbourhood who requires your assistance, then give to the churches of your own town. If any then remain, give it to St. Peter, and not before. My desire, my prayer, and my advice is, that you buy not these indulgences. Leave it to bad, idle, sleepy churchmen, to buy them: you can dispense with them. Whether men can be drawn from purgatory by the efficacy of indulgences, I cannot say; but I do not believe they can. Some doctors say they can, but they cannot prove it; and the Church says nothing about the matter, and, at all events, the surest way is to have recourse to prayer. What I teach is true.

“They that preach up indulgences make fools of you; they are not looking after your salvation, but after your pennies. Let some charitably charge me with heresy, because I have told out truths that do harm to their shop. What care I for their brawling? Empty pates, that never opened the Bible, who know nothing of the doctrines of Christ, or even about themselves, and are ever groping in the dark; God give them understanding.” *

The movements of Luther excited attention at the papal court. The Pope wrote to Dr. Staupitz, the friend and adviser of Luther, exhorting him to check his impetuosity, and to allay the animosities excited by the controversy on the indulgences. “The reverend father,” Luther says, “Dr. Staupitz, my dear friend, and the chief of the Eremites, who was himself convinced of the

Agitation
at the
papal court.

* Opp. xvii. p. 119.

truth, who loved the Word of God, and loathed the impieties and blasphemies of Rome, as soon as he received his instructions from the Pope, communicated them to me, and by letters and conversations urged me to reconciliation and forbearance. To do Pope Leo justice, these instructions were written in a manner friendly towards me, breathing the spirit of paternal care, and solicitude for the peace of the Church. I listened to these instructions; I assured my reverend father of my willingness to obey in all things, save those of conscience and duty." * Sylvestro de Prierio, a Dominican, and master of the ceremonies to the sacred palace, not having the same prudence and moderation, wrote in opposition to the monk of Wittenberg, and brought down upon himself a crushing reply.

Luther, on the 7th of August, 1518, was cited to appear at Rome within sixty days. His friends

Luther
cited to
Rome, 1518.

were alarmed at his position, and the Emperor Maximilian recommended that matters should not be driven to extremity.

Luther himself was not free from anxious concern. In a letter dated 21st August, 1518, he says to

Letter to
Spalatin.

Spalatin: "This is the course which it appears to our learned friends best for me to pursue, that I should demand of the prince a safe-conduct. He will refuse it me, I am certain, and I shall then, say our friends, have a valid excuse for not appearing at Rome. I would ask you, then, to obtain from our illustrious prince a rescript, setting forth that he refuses me the safe-conduct, and makes me responsible, if I persist in setting out, for all the dangers I may incur. By

* Hazlitt's Michelet, p. 40.

so doing, you will render me an important service. But the thing must be done at once; time presses; the assigned day is near at hand."

It was arranged, through the kind offices of the prince, that Luther, under protection, should be examined by a legate in Germany, in the free town of Augsburg. He departed from Wittenberg at daybreak, on foot, penniless, and habited in a worn-out gown. A crowd

Meeting
with the
legate at
Augsburg.

of people waited at the gates to take leave of him. As he passed through they cried, "Luther for ever." "Christ for ever, and his Word," replied Martin. "Courage, master," said some, who stepped forward to meet him, "and God help you." "Amen," replied Luther. His friends accompanied him several miles on the way, and after a parting embrace Luther said, "In manus tuas Domine, commendo animum meum." "Amen," responded his friends, as they turned homeward. On the evening of his arrival he wrote a note to his friend Melancthon, in which he says: "Continue quietly and faithfully to discharge your duty, without alarm; instructing rightly, as you have ever done, the youth under your care. For you and for them I go onward, ready to be sacrificed, if such be the will of heaven. I am not only ready to die, but—what were far worse to me—to be deprived of your dear society, rather than retract the truths I have maintained, or be the means of affording the stupid and bitter enemies of liberal studies and elegant learning an opportunity of achieving a triumph. Italy is prostrate in Egyptian darkness, and the people are ignorant of Christ, and of those who love Christ. But we know some influential men who regard true religion. The wrath

of God may be administered by our agency, as it is written, "I will make their princes as children; and children and the feeble shall reign over them."

Petition of the University of Wittenberg, 1518. Farewell, beloved Melancthon, and avert the wrath of God from us by your faithful prayers. Augsburg, October 12th, 1518.*

In the meantime, the university of Wittenberg sent (September 25th, 1518) a petition to the Pope in the most submissive terms.

"A certain brother, Martin Luther, Master of Arts and Professor of Divinity, a faithful and worthy member of our body, *has petitioned us*, trusting in the success of our application, and requested our mediation with your Holiness.

"By a commission instituted under the authority of your Holiness to investigate certain disputes connected with indulgences, our brother is cited to appear personally at Rome, but, on account of his health, and the dangers attending the journey, he is not able to undertake what he would otherwise be most anxious to do. Our opinion of him is, that he has never swerved from his true duty towards the Roman Church, nor become infected with heretical opinions. He has merely exercised his right of debating freely, which his adversaries have done; he has asserted nothing. We ourselves, holy father, would be held, as a body, determined to have no fellowship with any who oppose the genuine doctrines of the Catholic Church; resolved in the midst of all things, by your favour and that of holy Church, to be obedient to our Lord Jesus Christ, who, we pray, will move your Holiness to listen favourably to our petition."†

Luther, anxious for peace, was disposed to make every possible concession. "I was three whole days," he says, "in Augsburg without the emperor's safe-conduct. In the meantime an Italian (Urban de Serra Longa) came to me, invited me to go to the cardinal of Cajeta (Thomas de Vio), and earnestly persuaded

Luther willing to make concessions.

* Epp. i. 146.

† Michelet, p. 45.

me to recant. I should (said he) need to speak but only one word before the cardinal, '*Revoco*;' and then the cardinal would recommend me to the Pope's favour, so that with honour I might return safely again to my master, the Prince Elector. He quoted several examples—among others, that of the famous Joachim de Flores, who had submitted, though he had advanced heretical propositions." Luther preferred to wait for the safe-conduct.

"At the expiration of three days the Bishop of Trent came, who, in the emperor's name, showed and declared to the cardinal my safe-conduct. Then I went to him in all humility, fell down first upon my knees, then prostrate upon the ground, where I remained at his feet till after the cardinal had three times bade me rise. Thereupon I stood up. This pleased him well, hoping I would consider, and better bethink himself.

"He had no inclination," he said, "to debate with me; but he mildly and feelingly proposed to compromise the matter by submitting to me three conditions sanctioned by the Pope:

Conditions
offered by
the legate.

1. That I should alter my opinions, and retract my erroneous propositions. 2. That I should engage to abstain from propagating such doctrines in future. And 3. That I should not circulate any opinions opposed to the authority of the Church. I immediately desired to be informed in what respect I had erred, as I was not conscious of inculcating any error, for that the opinions I had set forth at Wittenberg had occasioned me no trouble or opposition there, and I was not aware I had changed any of my sentiments since I had arrived at Augs-

burg. This went on for four days, the prelate still refusing to have any controversy with me publicly or privately. All he did was to repeat over and over again, 'Retract!—acknowledge thy error, *whether thou believest it an error or not.* The Pope commands thee to do this.'” Luther was then allowed to explain his views in writing, but the legate violently refused to read what he had written.

Conference
with
Staupitz.

Finally the legate sent for Staupitz, and urged him to induce Luther to retract. Accordingly, Luther met Staupitz and Wenceslaus Linck, and as the result of the interview, he agreed to write to the legate in the following terms :

“I present myself before you again, my father, but only in a letter. I have seen our vicar, John Staupitz, and my brother, Master Wenceslaus Linck. You could not have selected mediators more agreeable to me. I am moved at what I have heard. I have no longer any fear: the fear I experienced is changed into filial love and respect. You were at full liberty to make use of force; you have chosen rather to employ persuasion and charitable kindness.

“I fully admit that I have been violent, hostile, insolent towards the Pope. I should have treated so grave a matter with more reverence. I am penitent for my conduct. I solicit your pardon for it in the eyes of all men, and I promise you that henceforward I will speak and act in an entirely different manner. *I will say nothing further about indulgences, provided you will impose the same silence on those who have brought me into this deplorable position.*

“As to the retraction, reverend sir, which you and our vicar require of me with such pertinacity, my conscience will not permit me to give it; and *there is nothing in the world, neither command, nor counsel, nor the voice of friendship, nor of mere prudence, which would induce me to act against my conscience.* There remains but one voice to be heard, which has higher claims than the other—that of the Bride, which is the same with the voice of the Bridegroom.

"I, therefore, in all humility, supplicate you to bring this affair immediately under the eyes of our holy father, Pope Leo X., so that the Church may definitively pronounce what is to be believed, and what rejected." *

A special courier was sent with this answer to Rome. Luther left Augsburg in the night, leaving a placard to be posted at the gates of the convent, entitled, "An Appeal to the Pope better informed." The practical reply of his Holiness in the matter was given in the form of three briefs for the condemnation of Luther, and sent by Charles von Miltitz (his private chancellor) to Germany. The friends of Luther entered into negotiations to gain time. On the 3rd of March, 1519, in a letter to the Pope, he writes :—

"Most holy father, necessity once more compels me, refuse of society and dust of the earth that I am, to address your exalted majesty; and I implore your Holiness to listen to the bleatings of the poor lamb that now approaches you."

"Charles von Miltitz, private chancellor to your Holiness, a just and worthy man, has, in your name, accused me to the illustrious Prince Frederic, of presumption, of irreverence towards the Roman Church, and demanded, in your name, satisfaction. And I have been filled with grief at the misfortune of being suspected of disrespect towards the pillar of the Church—I, who have never had any other wish than to assert and defend its honour."

"What am I to do, holy father? I have none to counsel me, on the one hand: on the other, I dare not expose myself to the effects of your resentment. Yet, how avoid them? I know not. 'Retract,' you say. Were the retraction demanded from me possible, it should be made. Thanks to my adversaries, to their fierce resistance, and to their rabid hostility, my writings have spread far more widely than I had anticipated. *My doctrines have penetrated too deeply into men's hearts for them now to be effaced.* Germany is at this time flourishing in men of learning,

* Audin.

of judgment, of genius. If I desire to do honour to the Roman Church, it will be by revoking nothing. A retractation would only injure her in the estimation of the people, and expose her to all representations.

“They whom I oppose, most holy father, are the men who have really injured and disgraced the holy Roman Church; those adorers of filthy lucre who have gone about, in your name, involving the very name of repentance in discredit and opprobrium, and seeking to throw the whole weight of their iniquities upon me, the man who struggled against their monstrosities. Ah! holy father, before God, before the holy creation, I affirm that I have never once had it in my thought to weaken or shake the authority of the Holy See. I fully admit that the power of the Roman Church is superior to all things under God; neither in heaven nor on earth is there aught above it, our Lord Jesus excepted. Let no credit be given by your Holiness to any who seek to represent Luther to you in any other light.

“As to indulgences, I promise your Holiness to occupy myself no further with them; to keep silence respecting them for the future, *provided my adversaries, on their side, remain silent.* To recommend the people, in my sermons, to love Rome, and not to impute to her the faults of others; not to give implicit faith to all the severe things I have abusively said of her, in the excitement of combating these mountebanks: so that, by God’s help, these dissensions may, in brief time, be appeased. For my whole desire has been, that the Roman Church, our common mother, should not be dishonoured by the base lies and jargon of these lucre-hunters, and that men should learn to prefer charity to indulgences.” *

The truth had not yet found in Luther a fully instructed witness, or a calm and consistent advocate. He had much to learn, and circumstances compelled him to give closer attention to questions in which otherwise he might have felt no special interest. It was manifestly the desire of all parties that the excitement should subside, and Luther was no doubt prepared to preserve silence on the condi-

* Epp. i. p. 234.

tions he had proposed, but Dr. Eck, a restless and ambitious polemic of the Romish Church, challenged Luther and Carlstadt to come and dispute with him at Leipsic. The well-known skill of Eck in debate, and his ready resources rendered the friends of Luther doubtful as to his fitness to meet his opponent. He was under the necessity, therefore, to make the best preparation in his power. Writing to Spalatin, March 13th, 1519, he says: "I am at work on the Epistle of St. Paul to the Galatians. I have in contemplation a sermon on the Passion. Besides my ordinary lessons, I teach a number of children every evening, and explain to them the Lord's Prayer. In the intervals, *I am looking through the decretals, with a view to my new discussion*, and I find Christ so altered and crucified therein, that I have not made up my mind (but the whisper in your ear) whether the Pope is Antichrist himself, or only the apostle of Antichrist."

In a letter written a year previously, dated Heidelberg, 30th May, 1518, he says: "I am now talked of malignantly in public, who have always been a lover of retirement, choosing rather to attend to the improvement and cultivation of the mind, than to make myself at all an object of public observation." He had no longer any other alternative. He was called to meet an antagonist, who would tax all his resources, in an assembly of the keenest and most influential observers. It was necessary for him therefore to enter on a course of the severest training. Eck was the very embodiment of scholastic subtlety. "He had visited the most celebrated professors in various universities"—the Thomist Süstern at Co-

logne, the Sumenhard and Scriptoris at Tübingen; he had attended the law lectures of Zasius in Freiburg, those on Greek of Reuchlin, on Latin of Bebel, on cosmography of Reusch. In his twentieth year, he began to write and to lecture at Ingoldstadt, upon Occam and Biel's canon law, on Aristotle's dialectics and physics, the most difficult doctrines of dogmatic theology, and the subtleties of nominalistic morality. He then proceeded to the study of the mystics, whose most curious works had just fallen into his hands; he set himself, as he says, to establish the connection between their doctrines and the Orphico-platonic philosophy, the sources of which are to be sought in Egypt and Arabia, and to discuss the whole in five parts.* He was one of those learned men who held that the great questions which had occupied men's minds were essentially settled; who worked exclusively with the analytical faculty and the memory; who were always on the watch to appropriate to themselves a new subject with which to excite attention, to get advancement, and to secure a life of ease and enjoyment. His strongest taste was for disputation, in which he had made a brilliant figure in all the universities we have mentioned, as well as in Heidelberg, Mentz, and Basle; at Freiburg he had early presided over a class (the Bursa Zum Pfauen), where the chief business was practice in disputation. He then took long journeys—for example, to Vienna and Bologna—expressly to dispute there.”† We may be sure a practised dis-

* *Eckii Epistola de ratione, studiorum suorum*, in *Strovel's Miscellaneen*, iii. p. 97.

† *Ranke*, i. 444, 445.

putant of this order had no misgivings as to the issue. In his account of the contest, he says: "I, as an old doctor, was there to make head against all enemies. Meantime, the prince sent me a fine stag and a fawn to Carlstadt. The citadel was prepared as our battle-field."

Duke George ordered a spacious hall to be prepared in the castle. Two pulpits were placed opposite to each other, covered with tapestry, on which were the figures of the warrior saints, St. George and St. Martin. There was ample provision of tables for the notaries, and of benches for the audience. Luther entered the hall with a bouquet of flowers in his hand; of middle size, wasted almost to a shadow with intense study and anxious care; thoughtful, yet calm and joyous. Carlstadt followed, not so tall as his colleague, and of dark complexion, with an air of confidence. Eck, tall, broad-shouldered, and brusque in manner, challenged universal attention, and when he mounted the platform, walked backwards and forwards, displaying to the audience the fine proportions of his majestic form. Mass was performed, the audience, kneeling, chanted "*Veni Sancte Spiritus!*" and the grand debate began. We shall not follow the entire course of the disputants. The question on the 4th of July, 1519, is that which chiefly interests us—" *Who is the head of the Church?*"

Eck. "There is in the Church of God a primacy proceeding from Christ Himself. The Church militant has been settled according to the pattern of the Church triumphant. Now, the latter is a monarchy where all rises hierarchically until we reach the sole chief, who is God Himself. Therefore it is that Christ hath established a like order of things on the earth. What a monster were a church without a head!

LUTHER. "In declaring that the Church necessarily has a head, Mr. Doctor does well. If any one present alleges the contrary, let him rise. As for me, I have nothing to do with it.

ECK. "If the Church militant has never been without a monarch, I should very much wish to know who he can be, if not the Pontiff of Rome ?

LUTHER. "The Head of the Church militant is Jesus Christ Himself—and not a man. This I hold in virtue of God's own testimony. Christ (saith the Scripture) must reign till He hath put all enemies under his feet. Let us not listen, then, to those who would confine Christ to the Church triumphant in heaven. His reign is a reign of faith. We see not our Head—yet we have Him."

The discussion on the primacy of the Pope continued four days :—

ECK. "It has been acknowledged from primitive times by all good Christians, that the Church of Rome holds her primacy from Christ Himself, and not of human right. I must admit, however, that the Bohemians, in obstinately defending their errors, attacked this doctrine. I beg the venerable father's pardon. If I am enemy to the Bohemians, it is because they were the Church's enemies, and if the present disputation reminds me of those heretics—for, according to my weak judgment, the conclusions at which the doctor has arrived are altogether in favour of those errors. We are even assured that the Hussites openly glory in them.

LUTHER. "I like not, and never shall I like, any kind of schism. Inasmuch as the Bohemians, at their own proper instance, secede from our unity, they do what is wrong—even although the divine law should be in favour of their doctrines—since the divine law is the love and unity of the Spirit."

"The question had now arrived at its most critical and important moment. Did Luther acknowledge the direct influence of the Divine Spirit over the Latin Church, and the binding force of the decrees of her councils, or did he not? Did he

inwardly adhere to her, or did he not? We must recollect that we are here not far from the frontier of Bohemia; in a land which, in consequence of the anathema pronounced in Constance, had experienced all the horrors of a long and desolating war, and had placed its glory in the resistance it had offered to the Hussites; at a university founded in opposition to the spirit and doctrine of John Huss; in the face of princes, lords, and commoners, whose fathers had fallen in this struggle. It was said, that delegates from the Bohemians, who had anticipated the turn which this conflict must take, were also present. Luther saw this danger of his position. Should he really reject the prevailing notion of the exclusive power of the Roman Church to procure salvation: oppose a council by which John Huss had been condemned to the flames, and perhaps draw down a like fate upon himself? or should he deny that higher and more comprehensive idea of a Christian Church which he had conceived, and in which his whole soul lived and moved?"*

Luther had time to reflect; before he could well finish his observations, the morning session closed. After dinner, the subject was resumed, and to the astonishment of the majority in the assembly, and to the awakening of their vehement displeasure, he rose calmly, and in a firm tone made this emphatic declaration:—

“Among the articles held by John Huss and the Bohemians, some are highly Christian. There is no denying this. Such is the following: that there is but one universal Church; and this other, that it is

* Ranke, i. 452.

not necessary to salvation that we believe the Roman Church to be superior to other churches. Whether it were Wycliffe or Huss that said so, is of no consequence—the statement is true.”

The meeting was violently agitated, but Luther continued: “Gregory of Nazianzen, Basil the Great, Epiphanius, Chrysostom, together with an immense number of other Greek bishops, have been saved, and they did not believe the Church of Rome to be superior to the other churches. The pontiffs of Rome have no authority to make new articles of faith. Holy Scripture is the sole authority for the faithful Christian. It is the only divine right. I beseech Mr. Doctor to allow that the pontiffs of Rome have been men, and not to think fit to make them gods.”

“Reverend father,” replied Eck, “if you believe that a council regularly convoked can err, you are to me as a heathen and a publican.”*

The discussion produced a powerful effect upon the mind of Melancthon. After hearing the most subtle and able advocates of the Romish doctrine, he felt thoroughly satisfied as to the weakness of their cause. He wrote an account of the debate which called forth an offensive reply from Eck. Melancthon, in answer to this scurrilous production, wrote a tract in which he explained the *true principles of Biblical interpretation* :—

“Eck,” Melancthon says, “is confident of being victorious by appealing to the authority of the holy fathers of the Church.

* *Disputatio Excellentissimorum Theologorum Johannis, Eccii et D. Martini Lutheri, Augustiniani quæ Lipviæ cæpto fuit, iv. die Julii, anno 1519; Opera Lutheri, Jen i., 231.*

But how does this avail him? I am, indeed, by no means disposed to depreciate; on the contrary, I highly reverence those illustrious luminaries of the Church, and defenders of Christian doctrine; but I cannot deem it rash, as the fathers differ in their sentiments, to

Principles
of Biblical
interpretation.

receive the SCRIPTURE *and not the varying opinions of men as the ultimate appeal*. As there is always some one simple meaning to the language of Scripture (for divine truth is most intelligibly simple), this sense is to be sought by a comparison of passages, and by the general strain of the particular discourse. In this manner we are enjoined to investigate the sacred writings, as we examine the sentiments and decrees of men, by bringing them to the touchstone, and trying their consistency. Then, it is more satisfactory to consult their judgments on the meaning of Scripture, from those places where they professedly explain it, rather than where they are only indulging their own feelings, in rhetorical descriptions. We all experience this fact, that Scripture is variously interpreted according to our various dispositions of mind and cast of opinion. This or that interpretation pleases because it seizes our feelings and captivates our passions; and as the polypus imitates the colour of the rock to which it fixes, so we are prone to use our utmost endeavours to conform our sentiments to the prejudices of our own minds. It frequently happens that the mind may admit, and for a time be wonderfully charmed with the genuine force and propriety of a sentiment, but afterwards be incapable of reviving such an impression; and thus the fathers of the Church, wrought up to a pitch of feeling, make use of Scripture, not in itself bad, but sometimes inapplicable and foreign to the purpose. And though I do not totally condemn this, yet I think it cannot be of much avail in controversy, for according to the Greek adage, *παλῶς τρέχουσιν ἄλλα ἐπὶ δόδῳ*, 'They run well, but then they do not keep in the course.' I dare affirm, that sometimes the fathers have given interpretations of Scripture, suggested, perhaps, to the mind in a state of high religious feeling, and which might not be erroneous, but which to us inferior men, and in a less glowing state of mind, have not seemed to accord with the literal sense. There is a secret manna and food of the soul to which Paul alludes, when he speaks of *spiritually discerning* it, which is more easily felt than described.

"But who does not perceive how often the Scriptures have been misapplied in the different controversies that have been agitated at various periods, of which innumerable examples might be adduced ; so that it has frequently happened, especially of late, that their exposition has been at complete variance with the original text. As to the scholastic method of interpretation, it is anything but simple—a very Proteus, transforming the sense of Scripture into allegories, tropes, and figures, and diverting the truth from its literal, grammatical, or historical meaning into I know not what wretched and polluted channels."

In this clear exposition of principles an important step was gained. After the discussion at Leipsic Luther advanced with more firmness. He explains, in a letter dated March 27th, 1519, the diffidence he had felt before :—

"I was alone, and thrown into this struggle without previously weighing the matter maturely. Under such circumstances, I at first gave up to the Pope many essential articles. Who was I, a poor miserable monk, that I should make head against the majesty of the Pope, before which the kings of the earth (nay, earth itself, hell, and heaven) trembled ? What I suffered during the first and second year—into how deep a dejection I fell, no imaginary or affected defection, but a *regular prostration of mind, or rather, utter despair*—cannot be conceived by those who, with easy confidence, have since rushed along the beaten road, to attack the Pope with such fierceness and presumption. Obtaining no light to light me on my dark dark path, from the dead mute masters (I speak of the books of the theologians and priests), I desired to seek the living counsel of the churches of God ; so that, if there existed pious men, illumined by the Holy Spirit, they might take compassion upon me, and give me sound and assured advice, for my own good, and that of all Christendom. But it was impossible for me to recognize them, I looked only to the Pope, the cardinals, bishops, theologians, canonists, monks, priests ; it was from them I sought the spirit, for I had so thoroughly filled and stuffed myself with their doctrine, that I no longer knew whether I was awake or asleep. Had I then braved the Pope, as I do

now, I should have expected the earth to open and swallow me up on the spot, as it did Korah and Abiram. When I heard the name of *the Church* set forth, I trembled and offered to yield. In 1518, I said to the Cardinal of Gæta, at Augsburg, that I would thenceforward hold my peace, if only, as I humbly prayed, silence was also imposed upon my enemies, and their clamours put an end to. Far from granting me this concession, they threatened if I did not instantly retract, to condemn all I had taught, without exception or condition whatever. I had already sent forth the catechism by which, under the blessing of God, many men had grown better. I could not permit it to be condemned. I was thus compelled to the step which at the time I regarded as the worst of evils."

At this time Luther read with the deepest interest the works of John Huss, which reached him from Bohemia. "I taught Huss's opinions," he said in February, 1520, "without knowing it, and so did Staupitz without knowing it. Paul and Augustine are Hussites. I do not know what to think for amazement."

On the 26th of October, Luther published his famous work, entitled the "*Babylonian Captivity*." "Two years ago," he says, "I attacked the indulgences, but with an indecision and ^{Babylonian Captivity.} fear that I am now ashamed of. Nor was this wonderful, seeing that I rolled that rock alone. I denied that the Popedom was divine, but admitted that it was of human right. But having heard and read the most subtle subtleties of these Popes, in upholding their idol, I know now, and am assured that the *Popedom is the kingdom of Babylon*, and the might of Nimrod, the sturdy hunter. I pray, therefore, all my friends, and all the booksellers, to burn all that I have written on the subject, and to replace them with this single proposition—

“that Papacy is a general chase, commanded by the Roman bishop, to overtake and destroy souls.”

The tract was read with great avidity, and all the writings of Luther had an extensive circulation. The controversy had so far advanced now, that the court of Rome could not suffer Luther to continue in his course without a check. All the resources of the Papacy were put in requisition, either to induce him to retract, or to silence him effectually, by any means in their power. Agents were employed to lure him from the protection of the elector of Saxony, and to stir up the emperor to suppress his teaching. Luther, apprised of the intention of the Pope, to prepare a Bull for this purpose, anticipated the meditated blow by issuing a treatise, on the 4th of November, 1520, entitled, “Against the Bull of Anti-
Bull of Anti-
christ,
1520.
 christ,” in which he said: “What errors, what deceptions, have found their way among the poor people under the mantle of *the Church*, and of the pretended infallibility of the Pope! How many souls have been lost! how much blood has been shed! how many murders committed! how many kingdoms destroyed!

“Let my books be destroyed. I wish for nothing more; *for my only wish has been to lead souls to the Bible*, after coming to which, they may forsake my writings, one and all. Great God! had we but the knowledge of the Scriptures, what need would there be for my books?

“By the grace of God, I am free; and Bulls neither comfort nor terrify me. My strength and consolation are placed where neither men nor devils can reach them.”

On the 17th of November, 1520, Luther entered a formal protest against the Pope, in the presence of five witnesses, who met in one of the halls of the Augustinian monastery, at Wittenberg. The declaration, solemnly pronounced, was to the following effect:—

Protest
against the
Pope.

“Whereas, the Pope’s authority is not above but beneath the Scripture, and he has no right to slay Christ’s sheep, and to throw them into the jaws of the wolf, I, Martin Luther, Augustinian Doctor of the sacred Scriptures, at Wittenberg, appeal by this written document, for myself, and for those who may, or shall be, with me, from the most holy Pope Leo, to a future universal Christian council.

“I appeal from the said Leo, first as from an iniquitous, rash, and tyrannical judge, who condemns me unheard, and without assigning reasons; secondly, as from a heretic and apostate, wandering from the right way, hardened and condemned by the Holy Scriptures, who enjoins to deny that faith is necessary to the due use of the sacraments; thirdly, as from an enemy, an Antichrist, an adversary, a tyrant of Holy Scripture, who dares to oppose his own words to all the words of God; fourthly, as from a contemner, a slanderer, a blasphemer of the Holy Christian Church, and of a free council, who maintains that a council, in itself, is nothing; therefore, do I most humbly beseech the most serene, most illustrious, excellent, generous, noble, powerful, wise, and prudent lords, Charles, Roman emperor, the electors, princes, counts, barons, knights, gentlemen, counsellors, cities and boroughs of the whole German nation, to adhere to my protestation, and to join me in resisting the Antichristian conduct of the Pope, for the glory of God, for the defence of the Church and Christian doctrine, and for the upholding of the free Councils of Christendom, and Christ our Lord will abundantly recompense them with his everlasting favour. But should any one despise this my prayer, and continue to obey that impious man, the Pope, rather than God, I, by these presents, wash my hands of the responsibility thereof, having faithfully warned their consciences, and I leave them to the supreme judgment of God, together with the Pope and all his adherents.”

The papal missive for the condemnation of Luther was issued on the 9th of November, 1520.

On the 10th of December, 1520, Luther
Burns the
Pope's bull,
1520. publicly burnt the document at the gates
of the town; amid the exulting shouts of
the people. The next day he preached against it to a
large congregation.

Writing to Spalatin he says: "This day, the 10th of December, in the year 1520, at nine o'clock in the morning, were burnt at Wittenberg, at the Elster Gate, opposite the Church of the Holy Cross, all the Pope's books, the Rescripts, the Decretals of Clement VI., the Extravagants, the new Bull of Leo X., the Somma Angeleca, the Chrysoprasus of Eck, and some other productions of his and of Erasius. This is something new, I wot. If any one asks me why I act thus, I will answer him, that it is an old custom to burn bad books. The apostles burned books to the value of 5000 deniers."

Alive, no doubt, to the perils around him, Luther sought the aid of the princes, and evoked powers on
Appeal to
the nobles
of Germany. the side of truth which were beyond his
control. A few months before he had
sounded the tocsin of alarm in a vehement
appeal to the "Christian nobles of Germany."

"When a town is surprised by the enemy," he said, "the honour is to him who first of all cries to arms, whether he be burgomaster or not. Why should it not be the same with reference to him who, a watchful sentinel against our infernal enemies, should be the first to see them advance, and the first to assemble Christians against them? Must he needs to be Pope to do this? Let the Pope put an end to the preposterous luxury with which he is surrounded, and make an approach to the poverty of Jesus Christ. His court swallows up enormous sums.

It has been calculated that more than 3000 florins are sent off every year from Germany to Rome.

"The doctrine of the Bohemians should be inquired into more impartially and fully than has yet been done. And we might with good effect unite with them in resisting the court of Rome.

"Poor Germans that we are, we have been deceived. We were born to be masters, and we have been compelled to bow the head beneath the yoke of our tyrants, and to become slaves. Name, title, ensigns of royalty—we possess all these; force, power, right, liberty—all these have gone over to the Popes, who robbed us of them. For them the grain; for us the straw. It is time we should cease to content ourselves with the mere image of the empire; it is time we resume the sceptre, our body, and our soul, and our treasure; it is time the glorious Teutonic people should cease to be the puppet of the Roman Pontiff. Because the Pope crowns the emperor it does not follow that the Pope is superior to the emperor. Samuel, who crowned Saul and David, was not above these kings; nor Nathan above Solomon, whom he consecrated. Let the emperor, then, be a veritable emperor, and no longer allow himself to be stripped of his sword or of his sceptre."

The rubicon was crossed. Luther had cast himself into the struggle which would allow of no compromise. He was not only the leader of the Reformation, but the prime mover of a revolt from the Pope's temporal authority. He renewed his attacks on the papal Antichrist.

There was considerable excitement at the papal court. Manuel writes, 12th of May, 1520, to the emperor: "Your majesty must go to Germany, and there confer some favour upon a certain Luther, who is at the court of Saxony, and excites great anxiety in the court of Rome by the things which he preaches."* The

Excitement
at the papal
court.

* Ranke, i. p. 522; Llorente, i. p. 398.

Pope hoped to gain the counsellors and secretaries of the emperor to his views by bribery. In one of his letters Aleander says, though they hate the Papacy, they will "dance to Rome's piping if they do but see her gold."* The papal nuncio arrived at the court of the emperor with the Bull against Luther, and urged his majesty to give it effect by an imperial edict without further trial. A draft was prepared for this purpose to this effect: "And [since] then, the said Martin Luther has openly preached, written, and spread all this as much as possible, and has now lately accepted certain articles which are maintained in many places in Bohemia, and which are recognized and declared by the holy councils to be heretical, and his papal Holiness has therefore, as beforesaid, declared and condemned him as an avowed heretic, and therefore it is neither advisable nor fitting to hear him further." The emperor stipulated, on condition that the severities of the inquisition should be mitigated, and its constitution adapted to the forms of the common law, Luther should be silenced; but it was found impossible to act in Germany without the concurrence of the states. "They begged the emperor to reflect what an impression would be made on the common people, in whose minds Luther's preaching had awakened various thoughts, fantasies, and wishes, if he were sentenced by so severe a mandate, without being even called to take his trial."† The emperor had no alternative but to summon Luther before the Diet.

The famous Diet of Worms was opened on the

* Aleander's Letters in Münter *Berträge zur Kirchengeschichte*, p. 78.

† Ranke, i. 528.

28th of January, 1521; and the emperor Charles V. wrote to the elector, desiring him to bring Luther with him to its sittings. Spalatin, on the part of the elector, wrote to ascertain the intentions of Luther, in the event of his receiving a summons. He replied, that he looked upon the orders of his imperial majesty as a call from heaven, which he would never resist; that if any attempt were made on his person, he would recommend himself to God, who had preserved the young Hebrews in the furnace; that Jesus Christ alone could judge what was most serviceable to religion and to the state, whether he should live to defend the truth, or whether he should die in the confession of it; but that whatever it should please Him to appoint, he was ready to obey Him; and that he would never expose the gospel to the insults of the wicked, by giving them occasion to say that he was afraid to avow the truth which he had taught, or to shed his blood for its confirmation.

Diet of
Worms,
1521.

Letter of
Luther to
Spalatin.

“I have but one thing,” he adds, “to ask of God; namely, that He will not permit his imperial majesty to dishonour the outset of his reign by unjust punishments, and by the protection of impiety. I have repeatedly declared I would rather perish by the hands of the agents of Rome, than the emperor should be involved in such a crime, or the evils which will ensue from it. You are acquainted with the misfortunes that pursued the Emperor Sigismund after the death of John Huss. He saw all his sons perish; Ladislaus, the son of his daughter, died soon after, by which means his whole family became extinct in the course of one generation. His wife, Barbe, was the disgrace of queens. You are not ignorant of the other calamities which oppressed him. If, however, it be the pleasure of God that I should be delivered up, not only to pontiffs, but to nations, his

will be done; such is my determination. You may expect every thing of me except flight or recantation. May God strengthen me in this resolution." *

The Pope, at this serious juncture, felt considerable alarm, and not without reason. Before we follow Luther to Worms, it will prepare us better to judge of the parties he there confronted, to glance at the contents of a file of letters from the Vatican.

File of
letters from
the Pope.

"*February 25th, 1521.*—Manuel, the imperial ambassador at Rome, writes to the emperor to say, that if he goes to Germany he should pay some attention to Friar Martin, who is staying with the Duke Frederic of Saxony. '*The Pope is exceedingly afraid of him, as he preaches openly against the authority of Rome, and is said to be a great scholar.*'

"*March 20th, 1521.*—Manuel intimates that the Pope wishes to see the emperor, to concert measures of coercion against Martin Luther. '*The Pope has the affairs of Luther much at heart.*' On the same day (March 20th, 1521) the Pope urges Manuel to remind the emperor in every letter he writes not to treat affairs concerning Martin Luther lightly. Some of the cardinals complain to the consistory that he (the emperor) has ordered Martin Luther into his presence, and say that he has thereby arrogated to himself a jurisdiction which belongs to the Holy See. Manuel has exculpated him.

"The Pope says that he has been informed that the emperor was ill-advised when he decided to see Martin Luther, 'who would not be well received in hell;' his Holiness begs him not to forget what are his obligations towards God, the Church, and himself.

"*April 2nd, 1521.*—The affairs of Luther are very troublesome to the Pope. After hearing the assuring communications of the imperial ambassador, the holy father explained, 'God be thanked who has sent me in these times an emperor who takes so much care of the Church.'

"*April 25th, 1521.*—The Pope sends to tell Juan Manuel that

* Epp. i. p. 536.

Luther has already arrived at the imperial court, and that a disputation is to take place; this, in the opinion of the Pope, will be the surest way to bring about the ruin of the Church.

"Manuel tells him that he knows nothing about it; that at all events the emperor will take care that the interests of God and the Pope will not be injured. The Pope considers the affairs of Luther to be of paramount importance. Nothing can be obtained from him if in this respect his will is not done; he begs the emperor to do his duty to God and to satisfy the Pope.

"*April 28th, 1521.*—Raphael de Medicis writes to the emperor to say that the Pope is very much occupied with this Martin Luther, and that he is anxiously waiting for news of what has happened after his arrival at Worms."*

Leaving his Holiness in this unavoidable suspense, we must now attend to the story of Luther's journey to Worms, which is best given in his own words.

On the 1st of March, 1521, just before leaving for the Diet, Luther sent certain woodcuts to Spalatin, executed by Lucas Cronach, which he said had been sent by the artist that he, Luther, might write explanations under them, and with further instructions, when he had done so, Pictorial souvenirs. to forward them to Spalatin. "You will take care of them," Luther writes; "the Antithesis of Christ and the Pope is in course of publication, a good book especially for the laity." The pamphlet consists of thirteen folios; at every opening are presented in contrast two woodcuts—the one on the left hand page representing some scene in the Passion of Christ, that on the right hand page representing in contrast a scene in the Passion of Antichrist. On the first, Christ is represented refusing to be made king, and fleeing from the people; on the other side is the Pope in his robes and triple crown,

* Bergenroth.

backed by soldiers, pole-axes, and cannon. These are followed by a succession of contrasts; Christ mocked with the crown of thorns and beaten with rods, contrasted with the Pope in pontifical robes on a throne of state; Christ kneeling to wash the disciples' feet, contrasted with the Pope receiving his kneeling courtiers to kiss his sacred toe; Christ sinking under the burden of his cross, is contrasted with the Pope carried in state upon the shoulders of six men; Christ driving the money-changers out of the temple, and the Pope selling bulls and dispensations, with a heap of gold on the table before him; finally, Christ ascending to heaven attended by angels, contrasted with the Pope as the "son of perdition" conducted to his "own place" by the legions of Satan.

Having attended to the proper arrangement of these pictorial souvenirs for the German people, Luther set out on his journey.

"The herald," he says, "summoned me on the Tuesday in holy week, and brought me safe-conducts from the emperor and from several princes.

Journey to
Worms.

On the very next day, Wednesday, these safe-conducts were, in effect, violated at Worms, where they condemned and burned my writings. Intelligence of this reached me when I was at Worms. The condemnation, in fact, was already published in every town, so that the herald himself asked me whether I still intended to repair to Worms. Though *I was physically fearful and trembling*, I replied to him, 'I will repair thither though I should find there as many devils as there are tiles on the house-tops.' When I arrived at

Oppenheim, near Worms, Master Bucer came to see me, and tried to dissuade me from entering the city. He told me that Glapion, the emperor's confessor, had been to him, and had entreated him to warn me not to go to Worms, for that if did, I should be burned. I should do well, he added, to stop in the neighbourhood, at Franz von Sickengen's, who would be very glad to entertain me.

“The wretches did this for the purpose of preventing me from making my appearance within the time prescribed; they knew that if I delayed only three more days my safe-conduct would have been no longer available, and then they would have shut the gates in my face, and without hearing what I had to say, have arbitrarily condemned me. I went on, then in the purity of my heart, and on coming within the city, at once sent forward to Spalatin that I had arrived, and desired to know where I was to lodge. All were astonished at hearing of my near approach, for it had been generally imagined that, a victim to the trick sought to be practised on me, my fears would have kept me away.”

Luther was the subject of violent alternations of confidence and of depression. On the 16th of April, 1521, when he came in sight of the old bell towers of Worms, he arose in his chariot and began to sing the hymn, of which it is said he had improvised the words and music two days before at Oppenheim, his “Ein feste Burg ist unser Gott”—

“A safe stronghold our God is still,
A trusty shield and weapon;
He'll help us clear from all the ill
That hath us now o'ertaken,” etc.

Luther entered Worms, accompanied by John Pezenstein, D'Amsdorf, and Suaven, a noble Dane.

Before the car marched the imperial
Entrance
into the
city. herald in full dress, his eagle in his hand.

Justas Jonas and his servant came next after the car. A great number of men on horseback had preceded this simple procession. At ten they passed through the gates of Worms, and thousands of the citizens accompanied Luther to his lodgings.

"Two nobles," he says, "the Seigneur von Hirshfeldt and John Schott, came to me by order of the elector, and took me to the house in which they were staying. No prince came at the time to see me, but several counts and other nobles did, who gazed at me fixedly. These were they who had presented to his majesty the four hundred articles against ecclesiastical abuses, praying that they might be reformed, and intimating that they would take the remedy into their own hands if need were. They had all been freed by my gospel.

"The Pope had written to the emperor desiring him not to observe the safe-conduct. The bishops urged his majesty to comply with the Pope's request, but the prince and the states would not listen to it; for such conduct would have excited a great disturbance. All this brought me still more into public notice, and my enemies might have been more afraid of me than I was of them. The landgrave of Hesse, still a young man at that time, desiring to have a conference with me, came to my lodgings, and after a long interview, said, on going away, 'Dear doctor, if you be in the right, as I think you are, God will aid you.'

“On my arrival I had written to Glapion, the emperor’s confessor, entreating him to come and see me at his first leisure, but he refused, saying it would be useless for him to do so.” Luther, in the interval of suspense, could take no rest. He passed nearly the whole night at his window, sometimes lost in meditation, and sometimes breathing the air of his hymn upon his flute.

On the following day he was summoned to appear before the Diet. A vast concourse of spectators filled the streets and covered the roofs of the houses, so that it was with extreme Appearance at the Diet. difficulty he reached the door of the hall. Sympathetic friends cheered him on the way by their looks of kindly recognition and words of encouragement. The crowded assembly within the building presented an imposing spectacle.

The scene has often been described as a favourite exercise for historic fancy ; the magnificence of the emperor in his robes of state, the cardinals of course in their greatest splendour ; Cara- Scene at Diet. ciolo in a red cassock ; Aleandro in a robe of violet, both with pointed beards ; on the right of the emperor, we are told, sat the two ecclesiastical electors, Albert the Archbishop of Mayence, and Richard de Greiffenklau, the Archbishop of Treves ; on the left the four secular electors in mantles of velvet bordered with ermine ; at the side of Charles, John of Eck, the official of the Archbishop of Treves and imperial orator, with the bundle of papers of divers forms, tied together on a small table ; Glapion, the Franciscan confessor of Charles V., might be recognized by his shaven head and his cord trailing on the

ground. Three heralds of arms appeared in front holding, the first, the hand of justice, the second the imperial sword, the third the crown of gold surmounted by the Latin cross. Here and there promiscuously mixed with them might be seen chevaliers of all the circles of Germany encased in steel armour; monks of various orders, habited in robes of divers colours; Spaniards in the suite of the prince, nearly all with casques of yellow silk, some with heads uncovered and others wearing helmets of iron; priests with the book of the imperial constitutions in their hands; bishops, burgomasters, and theologians filled up the space in the hall, lighted up by the rays of a cloudless sun. This is one picture. But other writers prefer to give us a night scene. Torches, we are told, were lighted in the hall, and their dusky radiance shone through the antique stained-glass windows. It might be so, but all the pomp and glitter of the assembly, whether by sunlight or torchlight sinks into utter insignificance in comparison with the interest concentrated on the man in the simplest garb, who had made Europe to tremble as a faithful witness for the truth, of which he stood in that crowded audience as the living embodiment.

Interest
centered
in Luther.

“I was then cited,” Luther says, “and appeared before the whole Council of the Imperial Diet in the Town Hall, where the emperor, the electors, and the princes were assembled. Dr. Eck (the priest), official of the Archbishop of Treves, opened the business by saying to me, first in Latin, and then in German :

“ ‘ Martin Luther, his sacred and invincible majesty, with the advice of the States of the Empire, has summoned you hither, that you may reply to the two questions I am now about to put to you. Do you acknowledge yourself the author of the writings published in your name, and which are here before me ? and will you consent to retract certain of the doctrines which are therein inculcated ? ’ ‘ I think the books are mine,’ replied I. But immediately Dr. Jerome Schurff added, ‘ Let the titles of the works be read.’ When they had read the titles, I said, ‘ Yes, the books are mine.’ ”

“ Then he asked me, ‘ Will you retract the doctrines therein ? ’ I replied, ‘ Gracious Emperor, as to the question whether I will retract the opinions I have given forth—a question of faith in which are directly interested my own eternal salvation, and the free enunciation of the Divine Word—that Word which knows no master, either on earth or in heaven, and which we are all bound to adore, be we as great as we may—it would be rash and dangerous for me to reply to such a question until I had meditated thereupon in silence and retirement, lest I incur the anger of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, who has said, *‘ He who shall deny Me before men, him will I deny before my Father which is in heaven.’* I therefore entreat your sacred majesty to grant me the time necessary to enable me to reply with a full knowledge of the points at issue, and without fear of blaspheming the Word of God, or endangering the salvation of my own soul.’ They gave me till the next day at the same hour.”

The crisis was solemn. Luther felt his weakness and his responsibility. Agitated and distressed, he found relief in agonizing prayer. Mathesius has preserved the following fragments of his petitions :—

Solemn crisis. “Almighty, Everlasting God! how terrible is this world! How it would open its jaws to devour me, and how weak is my trust in Thee! Oh! but the flesh is weak, and Satan is powerful! If my hopes are to rest in what is strong in the eyes of the world, then it is all over with me! the die is cast—the sentence is pronounced. God, O God, our God! come Thou to my help, and protect my cause and Thine against the wisdom of the world. Grant me this prayer—which Thou alone canst grant. It is thy cause, O my God, and not mine: it is not for me, but for Thee, to defend me against the great ones of the earth. It is thy cause—the cause of Justice and of Eternity. God of all time, come to my help—that help which none among men can afford me. Flesh is flesh; Man, a poor, weak, failing, faltering creature. O my God! hast Thou not ears? Dost Thou not hear me? Art Thou dead? No! Thou canst not die. Then, O my God! help in the name of thy well-beloved Son, Jesus Christ, my strength and my help, my citadel and my rampart. Where art Thou, O my God!—where art Thou? Come! Come! I am ready to give up my life as ’twere a lamb. It is the cause of justice; it is thy cause, and I will not separate myself from Thee. The world cannot prevail; and were it given up to even a greater legion of devils—even though the work of thy hands were to give way, and the earth to open its abysses before me, I remain firm. My soul is Thine, and with Thee to all eternity. Amen. O my God! help me. Amen.

“The following morning,” continues Luther, “I was sent for by the bishops and others, who were directed to confer with me, and endeavour to induce me to retract. I said to them, ‘The Word of God is not my word; I, therefore, cannot abandon it. But in all things

Luther,
before the
Council.

short of that I am ready to be docile and obedient.' The Margrave Joachim interposed, and said, 'Sir doctor, as I understand it, your desire is to listen to counsel and to instruction on all points that do not trench upon the Word?' 'Yes,' I replied, 'that is my desire.'

"Then they told me that I ought to place myself entirely in the hands of his majesty; but I said I could not consent to this. They asked me, whether they were not themselves Christians, and entitled to have a voice in deciding the questions between us as well as I? Whereunto I answered, 'That I was ready to accept their opinions in all points which did not offend against the Word, but that from the Word I would not depart.'"

Various attempts were made to induce Luther to swerve from his position, but he remained firm. The Chancellor of Treves said at the close, "Martin, thou art disobedient to his imperial majesty; wherefore, depart hence under the safe-conduct which has been given thee." Luther replied, "It has been as it pleased the Lord it should be. And you," he added, "do all, on your part, consider well the position in which you are."

"His imperial majesty," said the Chancellor of Treves, "with the kindness that is natural to him, consents, Martin Luther, to your having one day more, but upon the condition that you answer by word of mouth, but not in writing."

Resuming the proceedings on the following day, the official said: "Martin Luther, yesterday you acknowledged the books published in your name. Do you retract those books or not? This is the

question we before addressed to you, and which you declined answering, under the pretext that it was a question of faith we were putting, and that you had need of time for reflection ere you replied; though a theologian like you must know very well that a Christian should always be ready to answer questions touching his faith. Will you defend all your writings, or disavow some of them?"

Luther entered into a lengthened and clear explanation, in the course of which, whilst discriminating between the different kinds of books he had written, and disclaiming all idea of personal infallibility, he stated the reasons why he felt bound to refuse the disavowal demanded by the Diet.

"None can deny," he said, "who will listen to the voice and the testimony of conscience within, that the decretals of the Pope have thrown Christianity into complete disorder; the faith of believers has been shocked, imprisoned, and tortured by them, and they have devoured as a prey this noble Germany, for that she has protested aloud against lying wonders contrary to the gospel and to the opinions of the fathers. If I were to retract these writings, I should lend additional strength and audacity to the tyranny of Rome. I should open the floodgates to the torrent of impiety, making for it a breach by which it would rush in and overwhelm the Christian world. My recantation would only serve to extend and strengthen the reign of iniquity—more especially when it should be known that it was solely by order of your majesty and your serene highnesses that I had made such a retraction. A man, and not God, I would not seek to shield my books under any

patronage than that with which Christ shielded his doctrine. When interrogated before the High Priest as to what He taught, and his cheek buffeted by a varlet: 'If I have spoken evil,' he said, 'bear witness of the evil.' If the Lord Jesus, who knew Himself to be sinless, did not reject the testimony which the vilest mouths might give respecting his divine Word, ought not I, scum of the earth that I am, and capable only of sin, to solicit the examination of my doctrines?

"In the name of the living God, therefore, I entreat your august majesty, your illustrious highnesses, every human being, to come and depose what they can against me; and, with the prophets and the gospel in their hands, to convict me, if they can, of error. I stand here, ready, if any one can prove me to have written falsely, to retract my errors, and to throw my books into the fire with my own hand.

"Be assured I have well weighed the dangers, the pains, the strife, and hatred that my doctrine will bring into the world; and I rejoice to see the Word of God becoming the occasion, in the first instance, of discord and division, for such is the lot and destiny of the divine Word, as our Lord has distinctly declared, '*I came not to send peace, but a sword, to set the son against his father.*'

"Forget not that God is to be admired and feared in all his counsels; and beware, lest if you condemn the divine Word, that Word may inundate you with evils, and the reign of our noble young emperor, upon whom under God we rest our hopes, be speedily and sorely troubled. *God removeth the*

mountains, and they know not, He overturneth them in his anger.

“I presume not in all this to offer counsel to your lofty and superior intelligence, but I owed this testimony of a loving heart to my native Germany. I desire, in conclusion, to commend myself to your august majesty and your highnesses, humbly entreating you not to suffer my enemies to indulge their hatred against me under your sanction. I have said what I had to say.”

Luther, exhausted by the heat and the excitement of the occasion, paused for a few moments to take breath, and then repeated in Latin what he had just spoken in German.

The Chancellor of Treves, as soon as he had ended, said: “You have not answered the question that was addressed to you. You do not stand here to cast doubts on the decisions of counsels. You are required to give a clear and exact answer—‘Do you, or do you not, choose to retract?’”

“Since then,” replied Luther, “your imperial majesty and your highnesses demand a simple answer, I will give you one; brief and simple, but deprived of neither its teeth nor its horns. *Unless I am convicted of error by the testimony of Scripture, or by manifest evidence (for I put no faith in the mere authority of the Pope or of councils, which have often been mistaken, and which have often contradicted one another, and recognizing, as I do, no other guide than the Bible, the Word of God), I cannot and will not retract, for we must never act contrary to conscience. Such is my profession of faith, and expect none*

other from me. Here I stand, I can do no otherwise. God help me."

Various attempts were made to induce him to modify his decision, but he remained inflexible. In the course of a colloquy with the Chancellor of Treves, Luther said: "*In what concerns the Word of God and the faith, every Christian is as good a judge for himself as the Pope can be for him, for each man must live and die according to that faith. The Word of God is the common heritage of the whole Christian world, each member of which is competent to explain it.* The passage of St. Paul, 1 Cor. xiv.—"*If anything be revealed to another that sitteth by, let the first hold his peace,*" proves clearly that the master must follow the disciple, if the latter understand the Word of God better than he himself does."

Next day, the emperor sent for the electors and states to discuss with them the form of the imperial ban against Luther and his adherents. In a letter addressed to the people of Germany, and dated 19th of April, 1521, he expressed his determination to maintain the decisions of the council of Constance against a single friar, who maintains what is contrary to the faith of Christendom. It would be a great dishonour to himself, he said, and to Germany, the defenders of the Catholic faith, if these heresies should continue. Having heard the pertinacious reply of Luther yesterday," he added, "I will not hear him again, but proceed against him as a notorious heretic."

Luther was apprized by the herald of the imperial sentence: "Luther," he added, "since you have not chosen to listen to the counsels of his majesty,

Imperial
ban.

and of the states of the empire, and to confess your errors, it is now for the emperor to act. By his order, I give you twenty days wherein to return to Wittenberg, secure under the imperial safe-conduct, provided that on your way you excite no disorders by preaching or otherwise."

Luther bowed and said, "Be it as the Lord pleases; blessed be the name of the Lord." He added the expression of his warm gratitude toward the emperor personally, and towards his ministers and the states of the empire, for whom he affirmed, with his hand on his heart, he was ready to sacrifice life, honour, reputation—all, *except the Word of God*.

On the day following, after a collation given him by his friends, Luther set out on his journey to Wittenberg. The tidings from Worms gave great satisfaction to the court of Rome. On the 12th of May, 1521, a message was sent to this effect: "The Pope approves fully of the conduct of the emperor towards Luther, but he must not relent in his prosecution of such a man, his abettors, and followers." *

Message
from the
Pope, 1521.

The friends of the Reformation in Germany felt no great alarm. Melancthon writes to a friend † :—

"Martin still lives and prospers, notwithstanding the indignation and fury of Leo, to whom all things have hitherto been supposed possible. Nobody approves the bull which Melancthon's Eckius is enforcing, unless it be those who are more account. concerned for their own ease and indulgence than for the success of the gospel. We are certainly in no danger from it at present, though the hierarchy raves and thunders. Oh

* M. Re. Ac. d. Hist. Salazar A. 20, f. 177; Bergenroth.

† Ep. v., ad Hessiam; Ecclesias: Lib. vol. i. p. 168.

that you knew with what trembling hesitation this pontifical mandate is executed, for its abettors are in a complete strait between the general opinion on the one hand and the anger of the Roman Pontiff on the other, while there are many who would rather be openly accused of any crime than appear to be deficient in zeal for the Pope. You are doubtless acquainted with the proceedings at Worms, though I may say a word or two on that subject. Charles is constantly urged to proscribe Luther by an imperial edict, and there are great deliberations and debates about it. If the Papists could prevail in their rage they would destroy us, and they are vexed at the inefficiency of the pontifical decrees. They are in hopes that those which they are using every means, but I trust in vain, to extort from the emperor, will prove unavailing. Nothing can terrify Martin Luther, who would willingly purchase and advance the glory of the gospel at the price of his blood."

CHAPTER XII.

At the close of the Diet of Worms, Charles V. fulminated a decree against Luther, in which he describes him as a "fool," a "madman," and a "fiend in human form." "We forbid you," says the emperor, "to give shelter to the said Luther, from the time that the fatal term be expired, to conceal him, give food or drink, or furnish him, by word or deed, openly or secretly, with any kind of succour. We further enjoin you to seize him, or cause him to be seized, wherever he may be found, and bring him to us without delay." "As for the authors, poets, printers, painters, sellers or purchasers of handbills, tracts, or pictures, against the Pope and against the Church, you will seize them, body and goods, and treat them as you deem fit; and should any one, whatever be his dignity, dare to act contrary to this decree of our imperial majesty, we ordain that he be put under the ban of the empire. Let every one behave himself accordingly."

The friends of Luther were on the alert to ward off the anticipated danger. By an ingenious and kindly-intended stratagem, they waylaid him on his return home, in order to convey him secretly to a place of concealment and of protection.

The spot for this honourable captivity was admirably chosen in the Wartburg. This ancient castle stands on an eminence in the forest of Thuringia, and at the season when the nightingales sing, it is a charming abode for seclusion and rest. After the stormy scenes through which he had passed, Luther felt the effects of reaction in this place of solitude, and, for a time, suffered a complete collapse. His sleep was broken, and when alone, he endured great mental conflict. He soon recovered tone and vigour, however, and the months he spent in the Wartburg were marked by great literary activity. As soon as he could obtain the requisite materials, he applied himself to the study of Greek and Hebrew, and commenced the translation of the Bible. "I have published a little volume," he writes, on the 1st of November, "against that of Catharinus, on Antichrist, a treatise in German on Confession, a commentary in German on the Canticle of Mary, a third, on the 37th Psalm, and a Consolation to the Church of Wittenberg. Moreover, I have in the press, a Commentary on the Epistles and Gospels for the Year. I have just sent a public reprimand to the Bishop of Mayence on the Idol of the Indulgences he has raised up again at Halle, and I have furnished a Commentary on the Gospel of the Ten Lepers." There was an extraordinary demand for the writings of Luther, and they were read with intense eagerness, not only in every part of Germany, but also in France, Italy, the Netherlands, England, and Switzerland. Many, convinced by his treatises, began

Luther in
the Wart-
burg.

Luther's
literary
activity.

Extraordi-
nary de-
mand for
his writ-
ings.

openly to avow their convictions, and simultaneously, in different places, not a few were moved to preach. "No new arrangement needed to be made, no plan to be concerted, no mission to be sent. Like the seed, which shoots up on the ploughed field at the first genial rays of the sun in spring, the new opinions spread abroad through the whole land where the German language was spoken."* Monks and priests began to proclaim the new doctrines. No attention was paid in the first instance to the place where the gospel was preached, in a deserted church, under the shade of the lime-trees, or in the market-place, the laity were equally in earnest. In this sudden outburst of zeal, it is not surprising that some should have been tempted to wildness in their opinions, and to excess in the maintenance of their views. Disturbances arose at Wittenberg during the absence of Luther, of the most trying character.

At Zwickau (a town in the Erzgebirge), Claus Storch, a fanatical weaver, taught doctrines extremely pernicious and extravagant. His party
Zwickau prophets. contended that the Bible was insufficient for man's instruction; he could only be taught by the immediate inspiration of the Holy Ghost; they pretended to be directed in all things by special communications from heaven, and like the military "converters" of a former age in the Romish Church, they seemed inclined to propagate their opinions by the sword. Some of them came to Wittenberg at a time when the people were under the influence of great excitement, caused by the

* Ranke, ii. 74.

agitation of Carlstadt, who insisted that the worship of images should be instantly abolished. A riot commenced which the authorities were unable to suppress. The heated populace demanded of the council unqualified freedom for their preachers, the formal prohibition of all unbiblical ceremonies, and the establishment by law of a Christian community according to their own ideas.* Disorder spread rapidly, and there was danger that the contagion might extend so widely that the cause of evangelical reformation might soon be wrecked. The report of this strange commotion filled Luther with the deepest concern. Writing to the inhabitants of Wittenberg (December, 1521), Disorders
at Witten-
berg. he says: "You have afflicted, by your outrageous conduct, many pious men—men perhaps better than yourselves. You have rushed into your present proceedings eyes shut, head down, like a bull, looking neither to the left nor to the right. Reckon no longer upon me." For a while Luther attached no grave importance to the incipient movement, and entertained the hope that it would speedily subside.

"Take care," he writes, June 17th, 1522, "that our prince does not stain his hands with the blood of these new prophets. It is by the aid of the Word alone we must 1522. combat; by the Word alone we must conquer; by the Word alone we must pull down that which our opponents have raised up by force and violence. I condemn only by the Word; let him who believes, believe and follow me; let him who believes not, believe not, and go his own way in peace. *No one must be compelled to the faith or to the things of faith against his will*; he must be prevailed upon by faith alone. I

* Strobel, v. 128; Rauke.

also condemn images; but I would have them assailed by the Word, and not by blows and fire. I would deal with them so that the people should no longer have the faith in them which they have heretofore had. To effect this great object must be the work of the Word, and not of violence. Be assured the images will fall of themselves, when the people, becoming enlightened, shall know that they are nothing in the eyes of God: it is in this way that I would efface from men's consciences, by the power of the Word alone, all these devices of the Pope as to confession, communion, prayer, and fasting.

Staupitz showed this letter of Luther to Carlstadt, and tried to persuade him to restrain his blind impetuosity; but to no purpose. The tumult increased, and Luther could no longer remain at a distance from the scene of confusion. The elector desired him to remain at the Wartburg, and to prepare his defence for the next diet; but no personal considerations, at a crisis so serious in the estimation of Luther, weighed with him for a moment. On his way to Wittenberg he wrote a remarkable letter, from "Borna, on Ash-Wednesday, 1522," in which he says:—

Impetuo-
sity of
Carlstadt.

"As the Father of infinite mercy has given me power, by his gospel, over all the devils and over death, and has given me the kingdom to come, your electoral grace must see clearly that it were an insult on my part towards my Master, not to put my full trust in Him, or to forget that I stand far above the anger of Duke George. If God called me to Leipsic, as He does to Wittenberg, I would go there, though for nine whole days together it were to rain Duke Georges, and every one of them were nine times more furious than this devil of a duke is. I write this to let you know that I am going to Wittenberg, under a protection far higher than that of princes and electors. I have no need of your help; it is you who need mine, which will be of greater use to you than yours can be to me. Nay, if I thought you would persist in offering

Luther's
letter to
the elector,
1522.

me your protection, I would not set out at all. This is a matter which requires neither sage councils nor the edge of the sword; God alone, and without any paraphernalia of visible force, God alone is my master and my protector. He, among men, who has the fullest faith is the best able to protect me; you are too feeble in the faith for me to regard you as a protector and saviour."

The elector, hearing of Luther's departure from Wartburg, and alarmed for the consequences, sent Schurff to persuade ^{March 7, 1522.} him to return. Luther replied (March 7th, 1522):—

"I have been called, and I will go. Time presses; let destiny be accomplished, in the name of Jesus Christ, master of life and of death. Satan, during my absence, has penetrated into my fold, and committed ravages there which my presence alone can repair. A letter would answer no purpose; I must make use of my own eyes and my own mouth, to see and to speak. My conscience will permit me to make no longer delay, and rather than act against that I would incur the anger of your electoral grace, and of the whole world. The Wittenbergers are my sheep, whom God has intrusted to my care; they are my children in the Lord. For them I am ready to suffer martyrdom. I go, therefore, to accomplish, by God's grace, that which Christ demands of them who own Him. If my written word sufficed to drive away this great ill, do you think they would send for me thus urgently? I will die rather than delay any longer—die for the salvation of my neighbour, as becomes me."

On the arrival of Luther in Wittenberg, the fanatical prophets withdrew, and order was restored. For eight days in succession, Luther ^{Luther in Wittenberg.} preached to the people on the questions agitated amongst them. These discourses are the most important he ever delivered, and at the time had a most tranquillizing and assuring influence.

"If I had been with you lately," he said to the people, "when you were abolishing masses, I should have endeavoured

to moderate your heat and impetuosity. Your cause was good, but was managed by you with too much violence. There are, I trust, among the opposite party many brothers and sisters who belong to us, and must be drawn to us with cords of love. Let your faith be firm as a rock, but let your charity be pliable, and accommodated to the circumstances of your neighbour. The error of those who abolished the masses consisted, not in doing a thing that was wrong in itself, but in not doing what they did in a right manner. I would not pull away by force any one from the mass. Let us preach the gospel, and commit the event to the divine will. Let us, I say, beloved countrymen, abstain, I beseech you, in future from the mass; indeed, it is a blasphemous practice, and most highly offensive to the Almighty God. But by no means would I compel them—especially by the hasty and intemperate decision of a mob—to comply with our forms of sacramental communion. No; I would instruct and admonish them from the sacred pages.”

When moderate in tone, Luther wrote with great clearness and force. The doctrine of justification he set forth so prominently did not prevent his practical regard for evangelical morality.

“We conclude,” he says, in his commentary, Galatians ii. 18, “that we are justified solely by faith in Christ, without the law of works. But when a man is justified by faith, and already possesses Christ through faith, and knows that Christ is his righteousness and his life, assuredly he will not be idle, but, like a good tree, bring forth good fruit; because, in that he believes he has the Holy Spirit, who, wherever He is, allows not a man to be idle, but impels him to all exercises of piety, to the love of God, to patience in afflictions, to the calling upon God, to the giving of thanks, to the showing of charity to all. Wherefore we also say that faith without works is nought and empty. Hereby the Papists and the fanatics mean that faith without works does not justify, or that faith, however real, if it have not works, is of no worth. This is false; but faith without works—that is, a fanatical notion, mere vanity and a dream of the heart—is not faith, and does not justify.”

Evangelical
morality
taught by
Luther.

Luther insisted on the morality of the Bible, in contradistinction to Romish externalism. In his explanation of the Ten Commandments, given in his larger catechism, he says :—

“These are the Ten Commandments, a summary of divine teaching.”

“Besides the Ten Commandments no work or doing can be good or pleasing to God, however grand and splendid it may seem to the world. Let us see now what our great saints boast of their spiritual orders, and their grand difficult works which they have devised and piled up, while they let these drop; just as if these were much too mean, or already done with long ago. I trow one must have all one's hands full enough to keep these, gentleness, patience, and love toward enemies, chastity, kindness, and what such things bring with them. But such works have no mark and show in the eyes of the world, for they are not strange and puffed out, tied to particular places, modes, and gestures, but common daily housework such as any man may carry on toward his neighbour; therefore they have no dignity. But these others make our eyes and ears gape, and help themselves out with great pomp, cost, and noble buildings, and deck themselves so that they glisten and shine all over. *People burn incense, they sing and ring, they light torches and candles, so that one cannot hear or see anything else, except a priest standing in his golden chasuble, or a layman laying all day on his knees in a church.* That is counted a precious work which no man can praise enough. But for a poor girl to wait upon a young child committed to her, and to tend it carefully: this is thought nothing of, else what would monks go and seek in their cloisters. But think, is it not an accursed presumption in these desperate saints, that they take upon themselves to invent a higher and better life than the Ten Commandments teach, giving out, as just said, that these are a common life for common folks, but that theirs is for the holy and perfect? And they see not, so wretched and blind are they, that no man can mount so high as to keep one of the Ten Commandments as it ought to be kept; but both the Belief and the Lord's Prayer come to our aid, that we may seek and pray for power to do this, and may receive it without intermission. Therefore

their boasting just comes to this, as though I boasted and said I had not a penny to pay, but I trusted I could pay ten shillings."

This sound, practical doctrine inspired confidence in the Word of God as sure directory in all business and relations of life. Had Luther given the same attention to the simple declarations and examples contained in the New Testament in reference to the constitution and order of the Christian Church, a permanent basis would have been secured for a complete and lasting reformation. Luther failed to do this. His letters show that he had warm pastoral sympathies, but properly speaking, he had no "flock" as distinct from the general community. His church consisted of the Wittenbergers.

Luther's
neglect of
Church
polity.

The necessity and advantage of a simple church organization at this juncture will appear if we glance for a moment at the contrast exhibited in the Romish Church with that which existed at the time of the apostles. The statements given in the New Testament respecting the character, constitution, and objects of the Christian Church are exceedingly clear and simple. The churches planted at Jerusalem, Antioch, Philippi, Thessalonica, Ephesus, and other places, consisted of those who believed on the name of Christ, breathed his spirit and copied his example. Hence they are described as "Christians," "saints," "believers," and "brethren." Their association was voluntary, but every member "added" to them recognized the most sacred obligation to "fulfil the law of Christ." They were restrained by their deep conviction, and still by their supreme love to Christ to confess his

Primitive
church.

name and to identify themselves openly with his people, and to own his cause. They were prepared to give a reason for the hope that was in them without concealment or reserve. It was expected of them that they should walk worthy of their high calling of God in Christ Jesus ; and with such views the brethren welcomed them to their fellowship as "partakers of the true grace of God." In token of their allegiance to Christ, and of their relation to each other in Him, they celebrated the Lord's Supper in commemoration of his death. "They continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread and in prayers. The Lord added to the Church daily such as should be saved." "The multitude of them that believed were of one heart and of one soul." These primitive churches pretended to no infallibility of judgment, nor did they institute a severe and offensive scrutiny, but in the exercise of mutual vigilance and care they sought the unity in the faith and the purity of communion corresponding with the design for which the Church was separated from the world. In the Romish Church, on the contrary, there was no admission on a simple profession of faith in Christ, but its members were required to submit to external authority, and not unfrequently to deny their strongest and most cherished convictions on pain of imprisonment or death. Their unity was one secured by priestly coercion rather than that which springs from mutual confidence and the sympathies common to those who are constrained by the love of Christ. The members of this vast ecclesiastical organization

Doctrine of
Rome on
the consti-
tution of
the Church.

were not concerned that the members of the Church should possess vital godliness, it was enough for them that amongst the body collectively considered, the elements of Christian character were somewhere to be found.

“Schismatics,” says Bellarmine (the great authority in relation to the Church of Rome) “are excluded, who have faith and the sacraments, but who are not subject to the legitimate pastor, and therefore lose the benefit of the faith they profess, and of the sacraments they observe. But all others are included, although they may be reprobate, wicked, and impious, and in this we differ in opinion from all others who require to constitute any one a member of the Church inward virtue; but we believe that any one may become part of the true churches of which the Scriptures speak; internal piety is not required, but an outward profession of faith only and communion in the sacraments.”*

The fanatical people who caused so much trouble to Luther at Wittenberg, were originally impelled in their movement by the desire of witnessing a more complete and radical improvement. The dominant Church appeared to them as a corrupt mass, pervaded throughout with the leaven of false doctrines, customs, morals, and worship, from which it was necessary to be separated, in order to the formation of a purer and more spiritual Church. But, impatient with the half-measures of the reformers, and not less so with the apparent slowness of the divine methods of

Origin
of the
fanatical
movement.

* Disputationum Roberti Bellarmini, tom. ii. cap. ii., p. 148 d.

renovation, they tried to precipitate events, and to transform the world by violence and crime. In the frenzy of passion, they lost sight of all consideration of right according to the standard of the Word of God, and plunged into the most fearful excesses, with the pretence, or the illusory expectation, of effecting the needed reformation.

At this period, the Bohemian Christians, influenced by a better spirit and of more sober judgment, entered into correspondence with Luther, and, in 1522, sent two of their number to assure him of their deep and friendly interest in his work, and their fervent

Luther
and the
Bohemian
Christians,
1522.

prayers for his success ; giving him, at the same time, an account of their doctrine and constitution. Luther received them cordially. In the year following the Brethren wrote to him, urging the necessity of combining Christian order and discipline with that soundness of doctrine which he had introduced. He replied : “ We have not yet arrived at that state in which we are able to establish amongst us those regulations, and the maintenance of holy conduct, which we are informed exist among you. With us things are in an immature state, and proceed slowly. But pray for us.” As a kind of temporary arrangement, Luther recommended them to choose their pastors and bishops without scruple. “ First,” he said, “ prepare yourselves by prayer, and then assemble together in God’s name, and proceed to the election. Let the most eminent and respected among you lay their hands with good courage on the chosen candidate ; and, when this has taken place in several parishes, let the pastors have a right to visit

them, as Peter visited the first Christian communities.”

In 1524, the Brethren inquired of Luther how far he had advanced in the introduction of Christian discipline into the Church. When they
 1524. found that as yet no steps had been taken, they observed to him that this neglect operated against the Brethren’s Church, for many of their own congregation, who were not sufficiently grounded in the faith, were preparing to quit their communion, as they could have the gospel elsewhere without submitting to so strict a discipline. Luther, somewhat offended by their persistence in the matter, gave them no satisfactory reply, and intimated that he disapproved of some of their regulations.

Ideas of the right of congregations to manage their own affairs extensively prevailed, both in Switzerland and Germany. The magistrate and parish
 Schwoback, of Wendlestan, in their charge to the func-
 1524. tionaries at Schwoback in 1524, say :
 “Afterwards, it is incumbent on a Christian congregation to look out unanimously for an honest and blameless man, whom the same congregation has power to dismiss again. The Antichrist who holds you in Babylonish captivity has robbed you of this liberty among others.”*

The churches of the Duchy of Prussia, in 1525, organized themselves on the Congrega-
 Congrega- tional basis, introduced the Congregational
 tional Churches in tional discipline, and gave the people a voice in
 Duchy of calling the pastor. But Luther gave them
 Prussia. no decided encouragement. He committed himself

* Ranke, ii. 485 p.

to the variable and uncertain course of accommodation, adapting the temporary forms of the Church to local circumstances or prejudices. "I condemn no ceremony," he writes on the 14th of March, 1526, "which is not contrary to the gospel. I permit images in the temple, and the mass is celebrated with the accustomed rites, and in the same costume as formerly: and here, again, the only difference is, that we sing some hymns in German, and that the words of consecration are in German. Indeed, I should not have abolished the Latin mass at all, or have substituted the vernacular, in celebrating it, *had I not found myself compelled to do so.*"

Laxity of
Luther's
views,
1526.

In his "German Mass," 1526, he says: "The real evangelical assemblies do not take place pell-mell, admitting people of every sort, but they are formed of serious Christians, who confess the gospel by their words and lives, and in the midst of whom we may reprove and excommunicate those who do not live according to the rule of Jesus. *I cannot institute such assemblies, for I have no one to place in them; but if the thing becomes possible, I shall not be wanting in this duty.*" "You are about,"

he writes, July 16th, 1528, "to organize the Church of Königsberg. I intreat you, in the name of Christ, to make as few changes as possible. *You have in your neighbourhood several episcopal towns, and it is not desirable that the ceremonies of our new Church should vary in any marked degree from the old ritual. If you have not already abolished the Latin mass, do not abolish it, but merely introduce into it a few German hymns.*

Luther's
temporiz-
ing, 1528.

If it be abolished, at all events retain the old order and costumes." Luther proposed to look to the foundations after he had raised the superstructure, and, in the meanwhile, to construct it with a certain leaning to the surrounding Roman fabric.

Effect on
the Luthe-
ran Church.

The consequence was a crack in the building that no skill could ever repair. The Lutheran Church "has lost her independence, her peculiar vital activity, her authority in spiritual and temporal things, and, worst of all, her sense of dignity, and her desire for its restoration; so that any one would be liable to the charge of 'democratic' tendencies who should even refer to the old Lutheran conception of a Church organization recognizing the power of the people."*

During these arrangements and negotiations at Wittenberg on Church matters, the Pope (Adrian VI.) strongly urged the princes of Germany to combine against Luther. He writes, November 25th, 1522:—

"Ever since my exaltation to the Papacy, my thoughts have been engaged day and night in promoting the welfare of the flock entrusted to my charge, and in bringing back the wandering sheep to the fold. It is with grief of heart I perceive that Martin Luther, whom I am no longer able to call my son, is the mover of worn-out heresies, and that notwithstanding the paternal admonition of the Holy See, the sentence pronounced against him, not without the advice of learned men and universities, and the imperial edict passed at the late Diet at Worms, he still continues his wicked designs. The German princes and people should consider whether they can be without excuse, if they make no attempt to resist and put down the evil. Is it not monstrous that a whole nation should be seduced from the Catholic faith it has always professed by one miserable friar?"†

Letter of
Adrian VI.,
.522.

* Schenkel in Hertzog.

† Harleian, 4994, 2066.

The nuncios of his Holiness were instructed to say, "The Pope is almost in despair, and is at a loss what to do."*

In various conferences held on the subject, at the Diet of Nuremberg, in December 1522, it was found that the spirit of reform had spread widely amongst the people. Andrew Osiander preached boldly in the city, and crowds flocked around him to listen to his denunciations against the errors and the evil practices of Rome. In vain the Pope demanded the death of Luther; the princes assumed a bolder attitude, and made a counter-demand for a Diet to be held at Spires. Adrian VI. died in 1523, and left the unsettled affair of Luther to his successor, Clement VII. The Emperor, writing to the Duke of Jena, his ambassador at Rome, 18th of July, 1524, expressed his fears for the issue. "The evil," he says, "it is to be feared, will increase so much that it will be found impossible to eradicate it afterwards. Two remedies only present themselves, to my mind—either I must go to Germany and punish the heretics with severity, or a general council must be convoked." The Pope concurred in this view, "Though it be I," he said, "who first make head against the storm, it is not because it threatens me alone; but because the helm is in my hands. The rights of the empire are attacked more than the dignity of the court of Rome itself." Campeggio, the legate, was employed by the Pope to secure for him alliances in Germany. Everything is

Diet of
Nuremberg,
1522.

1523.

The em-
peror and
the Pope,
1524.

* Vit. b. v. 116.

to be feared," he said, "*from an assembly where regard is to be paid to the voice of the people.* The Diet at Spires may destroy Rome. Let us close our ranks. Let us understand each other in the prospect of battle." At the close of 1524, an anti-reformation league was formed at Ratisbon. Duke George afterwards formed a similar confederation at Madgeburg, Dessau. As a counter-move, the princes in 1526. favour of the Reformation entered into an alliance at Madgeburg, June 12th, 1526. The two parties made active preparation for military conflict.

Diet of Spires, 1526. It was proposed, as the last alternative, that the Diet of Spires opened the 25th

of June, 1526, should summon the refractory princes, and if they should refuse to carry out the Edict of Worms, they should suffer the consequences. The evangelical princes attended the Diet, but with no disposition to make the slightest concession. Ferdinand, King of the Romans, and brother

Ferdinand's decree, 1526. of Charles V., issued a decree, August 3rd, 1526, in favour of the Edict of

Worms, and a contest between the reformers and the Pope, supported by the emperor, seemed to be inevitable. But unexpectedly, a violent quarrel arose between the Pope and the emperor.

Quarrel between the Pope and the emperor. A truce was sought, in consequence from motives of policy with the princes of the Reformation. "Let us suspend the

Edict of Worms," the emperor wrote to his brother Ferdinand at Spires. "Let us bring back the partisans of Luther by mildness, and by a good council cause the triumph of evangelical truth."

The emperor invaded Italy, sacked Rome, and continued the war three years. "Then had the churches rest." The friends of the Reformation redoubled their efforts for the advancement of their cause.

It is interesting to observe that, in this interval of comparative quiet, attention was given to congregational singing. The people, instead of remaining passive spectators of a ceremonial service performed before them by the priests, joined with fervour in the service.

Congregational singing introduced.

"I am of opinion," said Luther (1524), "that it would be well, after the example of the prophets and of the ancient fathers of the Church, to compose psalms in German for the use of the people. With a view to this object, we are seeking poets in every direction; and gifted as you are with such elegant and powerful eloquence, versed as you are in the German tongue, I would pray you aid me in my labour by translating some psalm on the plan which I myself, as you know, have adopted. I would have you exclude new words and fine phraseology. To be understood by the people, we must speak to them in the simplest and most ordinary language, though, at the same time, pure and correct; each expression should be perfectly clear, and as close to the text as possible."

1524.

The introduction of the popular tunes was the first sign in many places of an interest in the Reformation. "Lutheran hymns were sung by boys in the streets, by men and women in the houses, first in an evening, and then by day; and Lutheran preachers arose."* "The popular poetry also devoted itself in other ways to the new

Popular tunes.

* Ranke, iii. 544.

ideas with that spirit of teachableness, and at the same time resistance to arbitrary power, which characterized it." Hutten published his keenest invectives in verse, and Murner depicted the corruptions of the clergy in long and vivid descriptions.

The greatest poet of the day warmly espoused the cause of Luther. HANS SACH's poem—the *Hans Sach's "Nightingale of Wittenberg, appeared in poem, 1523.* 1523; he compares the faith which had prevailed for fourteen hundred years, to the moonlight which had led men astray in the wilderness; now, however, the nightingale announces the rising sun and the light of day, while she herself soars above the dark clouds. Thoughts emanating from a sound understanding, instructed by the infallible Word, and confident of its own cause, form the basis of the many ingenious, gay, and graceful poems, not the less attractive for a slight smack of the workshop, with which the honest master delighted all classes of the nation."*

The homely rhymes of Luther had no great pretensions as poetry, but we may imagine the effect of such a ditty as the song—

"Eín neues Lînd wir heben an,"

concerning two Christian martyrs burnt at Brussels, in the year 1523, by the sophists of Louvain." We quote a few verses in illustration :—

"By help of God, I fain would tell
A new and wondrous story,
And sing a marvel that befel
To his great praise and glory.
At Brussels, in the Netherlands,
He hath his banner lifted."

* * * * *

* Ranke, ii. 95.

“Two fires were lit, the youths were brought,
But all were seized with wonder,
To see them set the flames at nought,
And stood as struck with thunder.
With joy they came in sight of all,
And sang aloud God’s praises ;
The sophists’ courage waxed small
Before such wondrous traces
Of God’s Almighty finger.”

* * * * *

“Their ashes never cease to cry,
The fires are ever flaming,
Their dust throughout the world doth fly,
Their murderers’ shame proclaiming.
The voices which, with cruel hands,
They put to silence living,
Are heard, though dead, throughout all lands,
Their testimony giving,
And loud hosannahs singing.

“From lies to lies they still proceed,
And feign forthwith a story,
To colour o’er the murderous deed ;
Their conscience pricks them sorely.
These saints of God e’en after death
They slandered, and asserted
The youths had with their latest breath
Confest, and been converted,
Their heresy renouncing.

“Then let them still go on and lie,
They cannot win a blessing ;
And let us thank God heartily.
The Word again possessing.
Summer is even at our door,
The winter now hath vanished,
The tender flowerets spring once more,
And He, who winter banished,
Will send a happy summer.”*

* Spiritual Songs of Luther, by R. Massie.

A strain like this in the streets of the old German towns brought out the entire population, not only as listeners, but to learn and to repeat the melody. It touched the hearts of the people. The children learnt these songs in the cottage, and the martyrs sang them on the scaffold. No power on earth could check their influence. The preachers might be silenced or banished, the books of the Reformers might be burnt and their circulation forbidden; but the pathetic and favourite song kept alive the remembrance of the martyr's testimony, and the truth taught by Luther and his coadjutors. Even when vocal expression could not be given to the words of the "new and wondrous story," they were hummed in the imagination, and all their impressive associations revived.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE truth in relation to the church polity of the New Testament—traces of which we find in the writings of Marsilius, Huss, and Wycliffe, and practically adopted by the Lollards—though passed over or very imperfectly recognized by Luther, found a disinterested and faithful witness to a large extent in FRANCIS LAMBERT.*

It is interesting to observe the gradual and noiseless manner in which he entered upon his course. He was born at Avignon, about 1487, and belonged to an ancient family of Vigelet, in Franche Comtè. His father, who was secretary of legation at the apostolic palace, he lost in childhood, and the care of his education devolved of necessity upon his mother. She committed him to the charge of the Franciscans. Interested in the fascinating picture they gave to him of monastic life, Lambert, at the age of fifteen, was induced to enter their order, in one of the strictest convents at Avignon, and expected to find in this community the nearest possible approxima-

* Lambert's Commentaries; Farrago, etc.; Hassencamp; Haag; Herminjard; Til. Schenk; Streider; Amœnitates Litter: de Schelhorn, tom. iv.

tion to celestial purity. He tells us that the appearance of the monks in their robes and sandals, with folded hands, solemn countenances, stealing with silent step through the lonely cloister, with the sweet tinkling bell and the choral chant, impressed him greatly. Avignon became to his youthful imagination a holy city. The pleasing illusion was soon dispelled on closer acquaintance with the monastic brotherhood. The Friars Minors (Observantins), to whom he looked as models of Christian sanctity, he found to be ignorant, idle, vicious, and impure. The Superior of the order, observing in Lambert a talent for public speaking, appointed him apostolic preacher. In the fulfilment of his mission he was expected to instruct the people of the surrounding districts in the doctrines and usages of the Church of Rome. The young preacher entered on his work with characteristic ardour, and to prepare himself for the more efficient discharge of its duties, he studied the Holy Scriptures, and gave familiar expositions to his rustic hearers on the Psalms, the Prophecies, the Book of Job, the Epistle to the Romans, and the Apocalypse.

This, in the judgment of the Superior, was being righteous overmuch, and the lazy inmates of the convent, annoyed by his excess of zeal, tried to divert him from his course by ridicule and intimidation. To escape their vexations, he asked to be transferred to the Carthusian order, but his request was refused.

During this state of mental excitement, some of the writings of Luther came within his reach, and he read them eagerly in his cell. The obnoxious

publications were soon discovered, and ordered to be burnt as heretical.

The truth could not be so easily erased from the mind of Lambert. Having received letters missive for the vice-general of the order, he left the convent in the spring of 1522, and, Leaves the convent, 1522. as the event proved, to return no more.

Habited in the garb of the Minorites, and riding upon a mule, he directed his course by way of Lyons toward Switzerland. He reached Geneva early in the month of June. Here he met Sebastian von Mountfaucon, the prince bishop of Lausanne, who entered into a discussion with him on the power of councils. Lambert preached in the city with much acceptance, exciting, nevertheless, the hostility of the monks, who denounced him as a heretic. He went from Geneva to Lausanne, where he remained a week, and furnished with letters of recommendation from Mountfaucon, he continued his journey to Berne, Zurich, Basle, and Fribourg. At Berne he was kindly received by Berthold Haller, and by Sebastian Meier, who, although not the first or most decided reformer in that city, by his great activity and simple eloquence exerted a powerful and beneficial influence amidst much discouragement and opposition. Haller, on parting with Lambert, gave him a note of friendly introduction to Zwingli at Zurich, dated July 8th, 1522, in which he says: "The sermons he has preached before the priests of Berne upon the Church, the priesthood, and other topics, have had a good effect. These were things not altogether new to them, but from the mouth of a Franciscan and a Frenchman they appeared per-

fectly strange.”* An eye-witness tells us that he entered Zurich on Saturday, the 12th of July, 1522. He did not understand a word of German, but could speak Latin fluently, and was permitted to preach four times in the cathedral of Our Lady before the prebendaries and chaplains. In his fourth discourse he treated of the Virgin Mary and the saints. Seated at the high altar, Zwingli, who was present on the occasion, called aloud, “Brother, thou erreſt.” The anti-reforming party, hoping to find an ally in Lambert, and encouraged from his fluency and learning to expect a triumph, they got up a diſputation between him and Zwingli.

Discussion
in Zurich,
1522.

It was held in the refectory of the canons, on the 17th of July, 1522, and continued four hours. Zwingli brought with him the Old and the New Testaments in Greek and Latin. The result was a victory, not for the Franciscan, but on the side of truth. Convinced by the arguments of Zwingli, derived from Scripture, Lambert raised his hands in the expression of thankfulness to God for the light of his Word, and resolved to give up the use of litanies, and to plead in worship the name of the only Advocate and Mediator. He laid aside the habit of a monk, and feeling a strong desire to confer with Luther, he continued his journey toward Germany, changing his name to John Serranus, to escape the fury of the monks. At Basle he made the acquaintance of Pellican, Limpurger, and Basil Amberbach. He reached Eisenach in November, and wrote to Spalatin, the secretary of the elector, to obtain for him an in-

At Basle.

* Herminjard—Zwinglii Opp., lib. xii. 206.

terview with Luther, and permission to reside in Saxony.* Luther, in reply to Spalatin, December 15th, 1522, said: "John Serranus seems to be a good man, but you do not need my advice in the matter. He does not understand the genius or temper of the prince; he may reside at Eisenach, or in some place where he may be able to give lessons. He does not need, any more than we do, that any one should take him under his protection. God can defend him as He protects us; only he ought not to be forsaken or driven back."†

Letters of
Luther to
Spalatin,
1522.

This did not satisfy Lambert; he wanted to meet Luther face to face, and, in his anxious desire to obtain this conference, he turned once more to Spalatin, to request Luther to ask the elector for a little "way-money," and to allow him to come to Wittenberg. Luther wrote, December 26th, 1522, to Spalatin: "I send you here the letters which Serranus and others have sent me from Eisenach. If the man comes to me I will admit him freely to speak with me; but in the judgment of charity (1 Cor. xiii.) we are to hope in all things the best, so also the faith commands us to fear the worst (Matt. x. 17). 'Beware of men.' Some commend the man to me, and some, if they do not excite my suspicion, certainly do not allay it. The best course to take is that the elector give him a little money, and enjoin him to remain at Eisenach, in order that we may see what is to be done. It is quite probable that Satan will tempt us, and employ his wiles to

* Schelhorn, i., iv., p. 327.

† Luther's Briefe, Ed. De Wette, ii. p. 263.

lead us astray in all things ; until we are sure of our ground, we must trust no one. If it is the will of Christ to send us an evangelist, He will most assuredly, either previously or subsequently, afford us signs and convincing tokens.”*

Whilst waiting for the decision of Luther as to his future lot, Lambert could not continue inactive.

Lambert's lectures at Eisenach. He commenced a course of popular lectures on the Gospel of John, and on the

21st of December, 1522, he affixed 139 theses as a public notice, on the celibacy of priests, auricular confession, baptism, penance, and justification, challenging all comers ; but none entered the lists against him.

On receiving the final missive of Spalatin, he left for Wittenberg, and arrived in January, 1523.

Journey to Wittenberg, 1523. Touched with his candour, his sincerity, and above all with his zeal for the Reformation,

Luther received him with fraternal sympathy, and became from that time his friend and protector. Lambert, writing to the elector of

Letter to the Elector. Saxony, January 20th, 1523, says : “ It has pleased God to bring me amongst the faithful servants of Christ, whom I have so long desired to see. Here I am in Wittenberg amongst learned writers and professors. I am advised by our Martin (Luther) to give lessons on the Prophet Hosea, the Psalms, Luke, or some other book ; but for Christ's sake direct some one to give me a little help, for I have not sufficient to sustain life. I believe God has called me with Martin, as brother with brother, to build up a strong citadel. The time of shaking

* De Wette, ii. p. 272.

draws to an end. Souls are moving throughout France; they have found the truth without teachers from sincere friends, and since my departure the work of the gospel has made wonderful progress.”*

Lambert wrote books to be circulated in France, but he could not find money to pay the printer. Luther, writing again to Spalatin, January 25th, 1523, says: “Francis Lambert is here. He is a man of noble family, but as a persecuted exile he is now reduced to poverty from his

Lambert
reduced to
poverty.

fidelity to the Word of God. Of the blameless life of the man there is not a doubt. Men who have heard him in France and in Basle, as well as the Suffragan Tripolitanus (Telamonicus Lampurger), and Pellican, give him the very best character. Although we have at the present time a superfluity of excellent teachers, yet we will not thrust him from us, if we find him qualified in other respects. The man pleases me altogether, and I think it is our duty to aid and support him in his banishment; but you know well enough that I live at the expense of other persons, and must also know that I have not the means to sustain him; hence he must be supported by some one else. It might not be amiss to ask the elector to give him twenty or thirty gulden in order that we may not lose him, and as some token of love to Christ until he obtains from his own country, or by his own efforts, the means of subsistence.”†

The court of Saxony was slow in sending aid to the impoverished refugee. He gave a course of

* Shelhorn, tom. iii. p. 335; MS. Autograph Bibl. Mus. Basle, No. 23, p. 19.

† De Wette, ii. p. 302.

lectures to a numerous audience on several books of Scripture, and occupied himself at the same time in translating the writings of the German reformers into French and Italian, to introduce the doctrines of the gospel into the two countries ; but the pitance he received was miserably small.

Yet in this state of depression and penury the flame of Christian zeal was kept in him ever burning. In February he wrote a tract to explain the motives which constrained him to cast off the garb of the monk, in which he says : “ It grieves me to be almost mute and unable to instruct the people with the living voice in the Word of God. I will wait on the Lord that it may please Him to ordain that as far as it may be possible, I may be enabled to lead at least by my writings, in Latin and in the vulgar tongue, all who read them to the knowledge of the pure gospel.”

In March, 1523, Lambert prepared an address to the Friars Minors, in which he comments freely on the evils connected with the monastic rule, and entreats them to renounce it for ever. “ It is certainly,” he says, “ the will of God that this impious kingdom shall be destroyed, not by violence, but by the Word of God ; and that in its place shall be established the kingdom of God and our Lord Jesus Christ. I would not, as the enemies of the truth would have it believed, do away with order, but with confusion. I do not oppose the gospel of Christ, which is the only rule of all believers ; but *our sole design is to attach ourselves to the Word of God alone, in rejecting the pitiable and the foolish inventions of men.*”

“ Certainly they are schismatics, contentious, and carnal who divide Christ and who say, I am of Francis, I of St. Dominic, I of St. Augustine, I of Clara, I of Bridget, I of this or that. Was Francis or Dominic or the rest crucified for any one ? or have you been baptized in any one of them ?

"There is scarcely one among them who takes simply the title of disciple of Christ. Some with the false appearance of evangelical humility are known as mendicants, others with an incredible rapacity collect worldly goods in all parts and drain the country entirely. They are in the world as moths in garments, as mice in granaries, as locusts in grass, as rust in metals. I would not attack the monks because I have been one of them when wandering from the truth; but I desire that those who err may receive from Christ the indispensable knowledge of the truth, in order that they may not perish, but that they may come to salvation."*

The Chevalier Anemond de Coct, Lord of Chastelard, in Dauphiny, visited Wittenberg at the end of March, 1523, and became a zealous co-worker with Lambert, and but for his want of pecuniary help he would have sent evangelical tracts into all parts of France.

Chevalier
Anemond
de Coct.

"The Chevalier Coct," he writes to Spalatin, May 28th, 1523, "is not yet gone. I follow the choice of Luther as to the books to be translated. Yet once more speak to the prince of my poverty. If I could receive from the royal treasury at least ten crowns in gold, I should be able to live with my servant."† He reports himself again on the 14th of June, 1523, to Spalatin, "I have forborne to request an ecclesiastical benefice. It would suffice for my subsistence, but it might divert me from the work of the Lord. I am not yet ready to send you my works. The commentary on the rule of the Friars Minors ought to appear shortly, but the printer waits for the commentaries on the Prophets, and for the Epistle which I have addressed to the Parliament of Grenoble. I have commenced some works in French, which may be printed in Hamburg. May the business be soon concluded. Nothing would be more useful in France than some publications in the vulgar tongue. The Word abounds in Germany, but the people of France and of Italy yet suffer spiritual privation. I am wait-

Lambert
occupied in
translating
books.

* Herminjard, i. p. 123.

† MS. Autograph Bibl. Mus. Basle, vol. G. i. 34, p. 72.

ing from France the replies of some of the nobles; from Savoy that of the Count de Chambre. When the Chevalier Coct returns I shall entrust to him some letters for certain French princes. I thank God for the protection you have given me in my exile, and assure you that I will follow with docility all your directions."*

The marriage of Lambert, with the approval of
 Marriage, Luther, on the 15th of July, 1523, in-
 1523. creased his pecuniary straits, although he
 received on the occasion a little friendly help.

Luther had again to prompt the memory of Spalatin,† August 14th, 1523, and ask for a small sum
 Continued of money to take Lambert to Zurich,
 privations. where, as on the border of France, he
 might have a better chance of support. A conference on the matter was held at the house of Luther. Melancthon, Pomeranus, and Anemond took part in the discussion, and the desire was expressed that Lambert should wait until he could accompany the Chevalier to France. This was found to be impracticable, and Luther in perplexity wrote to Nicolas Gerbel,‡ December 4, 1523, to ask if it
 Removal to obtain an honourable livelihood in Stras-
 Strasburg. burg. Lambert was in a great strait whether to go to Metz or to Strasburg, and at length took refuge in prayer, and had recourse to the lot. He decided for Metz, but spent a short time in Strasburg in March, 1524. Before we follow him to that city, a brief reference to the state of France at the dawn of the Reformation will not be out of place.

* Bibl. Mus. Basle, vol. G. i. 34, p. 74.

† De Wette, ii. 387.

‡ De Wette, ii. p. 437.

The gospel had been introduced at this period into that country by Lefevre, of Etaples, and a few zealous coadjutors. Lefevre was a man of humble origin and of unpretending manners; but as doctor of theology in the University of Paris, he attracted all around him by his learning and piety. In his study of the Holy Scriptures, he came to the same conclusion as Luther on the method of a sinner's justification before God, and as the light dawned upon his own mind, he diffused it with increasing clearness in his theological lectures.

Dawn of the Reformation in France.

Lefevre.

FAREL, whose career as one of the reformers was so active and influential, became one of his converts, and to their number were added Michel d'Arande, Gerard Roussel, and Francis Vatable. William Bricconnet, Count of Mountbrun, Bishop of Meaux, formerly ambassador of Francis I. to Holy See, professed evangelical sentiments, and invited Lefevre and his companions to preach at Meaux. They met the people first in private assemblies, but, gaining courage as they increased in numbers, the preachers ascended the public pulpits.

Farel.

Bricconnet.

Preachers at Meaux.

Lefevre laboured earnestly to give his countrymen the Holy Scriptures in their own tongue. On the 30th of October, 1522, he published a French translation of the four gospels; on the 6th of November, that of the other books of the New Testament; on the 12th of October, 1524—all these in a body at the printing-press of Collin; and in 1525 a French version of the Psalms.

Bricconnet sent a copy of these translations to

the sister of Francis I., Marguerite de Valois, who read them with devout attention, and had them circulated at court. "As the country about Meaux is remarkably fertile in corn, when its harvests came to be reaped a crowd of labourers flocked to it from the adjacent districts; while reposing at mid-day from their fatigues, these would converse with the people of the place, who spoke to them of other seeds to be sown and of other harvests. Not a few of the peasants from Thierarche, and still more those from Landouzy, after returning home, persevered in maintaining the doctrines they had heard, and in a short time there was formed there an evangelical church, now one of the oldest in the kingdom."*

Briconnet, faltering in his course, issued an ordinance on the 12th of April, 1523, recalling the licence to preach of these earnest Christian teachers. Farel retired from Meaux, first to Paris, and then into Dauphiny. Antoine Froment says that, fearing to lose his bishopric and his life, Briconnet changed his *rôle*, and became the persecutor of those whom he had instructed.

Briconnet left no room for doubt as to his opposition to Luther. In his synodal decree of October 15th, 1523, he says:—

"As the world is almost entirely filled with the books of Luther, and as the people, fond as they are of novelty and of licence, and led away by the vivacity of his style, may allow themselves to indulge in that imaginary and fallacious liberty that he preaches, and so to exchange the light, the truth, and the life for darkness, falsehood, and death, if not only the sentinels, but each member of the flock, do not labour to extinguish the

Defection
of Bricon-
net.

* Merle d'Aubigne, vol. ii. b. 12. c. 7.

fire which threatens—for these causes, fearing that a plant so venomous may cast its roots in the field committed to our care, we have felt it to be our duty to extirpate it, before it is propagated and multiplied. We interdict, in consequence, by this synodal decree, all and each of the faithful of our diocese, of whatever estate, rank, or condition that may be, and that under pain of excommunication and other penalties, from buying, reading, possessing, hawking, or from approving, justifying, and communicating in their public meetings or private conversations, the books of the said Martin, or those of which he is reputed to be the author. Enjoining them, on the contrary, immediately after the publication of the present decree, to put away from them these books which may be found in their hands, in their houses, or anywhere else, and to destroy them by fire.”

On the same day, Briconnet issued a decree to his clergy, equally peremptory, in which he says :—

“We enjoin you each and all in the most express manner to revert often to the subject in your sermons, and to engage your flock to make pious prayers for the dead, to believe in the existence of purgatory, and to invoke the very holy Virgin Mary and the saints, repeating often to that effect the litanies. If it should happen that any allow themselves to preach, to affirm, and to inculcate the contrary, and embrace the above-mentioned heresies, or any other errors, you will have to cite them immediately before us, and you will interdict them from evangelizing your flock.”*

On finding their spiritual guides dispersed, the evangelical Christians of Meaux endeavoured to edify one another. JOHN LE CLERC, a wool-comber, who had acquired a knowledge of Christian doctrine from the instruction of the teachers, together with the reading of the Bible and of several tracts, distinguished himself by his zeal and facility in expounding the Scripture. The church accepted him as their pastor.

John le
Clerc.

* Herminjard, i. 153.

Le Clerc set himself to go from house to house strengthening the disciples. In the ardour of his zeal, he removed from the porch of the cathedral a bull on indulgences, and substituted a placard of his own against the Roman Antichrist. For this offence he was tried, and sentenced to be beaten through the streets for three successive days, and then to be branded on the forehead as a heretic. His mother had the fortitude to witness the infliction, and at the close of the scene she exclaimed: "Jesus Christ and his ensigns for ever!"

At the close of 1523 Le Clerc withdrew to Metz, and, without giving up his trade as a wool-comber, he instructed the people, and gained many converts. He was aided in these evangelizing efforts by JOHN

CHATELAIN, an Augustinian monk and a Chatelain.

doctor of theology, who had been brought to a knowledge of the gospel by his communications with the Augustinians of Antwerp. The two young monks of whom Luther wrote in his song, had suffered martyrdom in that city a few months before—John Esch, and Henry Voes.

Such was the state of affairs when Francis Lambert directed his steps to Metz, in March, 1524, accompanied by his noble wife, Christine. Lambert at Metz, 1524. He thought it prudent to conceal his name, and it was only known that he had been a monk, and came from the neighbourhood of Luther. The governor of the city was entirely under the influence of the priests who were at that time nine hundred in number. An edict was put forth, that all the books of Luther and all heretical priests should be given over to the inquisition. Many of the burghers had

been persecuted. The magistrates, in whose council-chamber many disputations had been held, were afraid any longer to extend protection to the preachers. They refused Lambert permission to affix one hundred and sixteen theses, which he offered to defend by Holy Scripture against all opposers. The ferment in the city increased, and the monks and canons demanded his death. Yielding to the prudent counsels of the magistrates, he withdrew to Strasburg, where he was received with the utmost cordiality.

The visit of Lambert to the persecuted Christians at Metz, was not without instruction to himself. He found, in these simple believers, a more distinct and practical recognition of the Word of God, as the only rule of faith and practice in their church organization, than at Wittenberg. Lefevre, in his address to the Christians from Meaux, 1522, says :—

“ Oh, you who truly love God, and are particularly dear to me in Christ Jesus, know that those alone are Christians who love our Lord Jesus Christ and his Word with perfect purity. Their name is sacred and venerable, and as Ignatius said, ‘Whosoever calls himself by another name, belongs not to God.’ Now the Word of Christ is the Word of God ; the gospel of peace, of liberty, of joy ; the gospel of salvation, of redemption, and of life ; the gospel of peace after a long and continual war, of liberty after the most galling servitude, of joy after constant sadness, of salvation after utter ruin, of redemption after the most wretched captivity, and of life in which we escape eternal death. The people of all lands should aspire to nothing so much as to have Christ and his holy gospel, the living Word of God, their one study, their sole consolation. Their only desire should be to know and follow the gospel, and to labour for its advancement. That we hold fast that which our ancestors enjoyed, and the primitive Church, tinged with the blood of the

Lefevre's
address to
Christians.

martyrs, we need to know nothing beyond the gospel, for that is to know all. The study of the gospel is the only means to render happy, Hungary, Italy, Germany, France, Spain, England, Europe, Asia and Africa. Awake, then, to the light of the gospel, the true light from God; receive anew the breath of life, cast off all that fetters, all that which darkens that pure worship. Be attentive, not to that which flesh may do or say, but to that which God has said and commanded. Weigh carefully that sentence of Paul: 'Touch not, taste not, handle not; which all are to perish with the using, after the commandments and doctrines of men.' The Word of God—it is the only rule which instructs to life eternal. All that which reflects not the lustre of that Word, not *only* is unnecessary, but it is also absolutely superfluous. *So that if we would observe in its purity the worship in conformity with true piety, and maintain the integrity of the faith, we must no more attempt to put anything in the same rank with the gospel than we should try to place the creature on an equality with God.* That which is divine obtains then the victory; that which alone can save is the truth which is in the Word of God; all that is not in that truth can only lead to perdition.

"It is *pleasing to God that we should desire the model of faith in the primitive Church*, which offered to Christ so many martyrs; which recognized no other rule than the gospel, no other design but that of Christ, and which rendered its worship only to one God in Three Persons. If we regulate our life according to that example, the eternal gospel of Christ will flourish now as it flourished then. The faithful then depended for all things on Christ. We should, ourselves, look for all things entirely to Him. Upon Him they concentrated all their faith, all their love; towards Him we should cherish the same sentiments. *How should we desire to see restored, in our age, the image of that primitive Church.*"*

There was a partial recognition at least, at this time, of the primitive order of the Church, in the election of pastors. Writing from Meaux, in 1524, Roussel says to Farel: "I approve in general your ideas upon

Election of
pastors,
1524.

* Herminjard, i. p. 89.

the election of pastors, and desire to see them admitted everywhere; but the people should first become Christian, and feel the influence of the Holy Spirit." *

These views were acted upon by the people with more freedom and earnestness, perhaps, than their teachers originally intended. They evinced remarkable constancy. Chatelain, who re-^{Martyrdom of Chatelain.} mained after the departure of Lambert, suffered martyrdom, January 12th, 1525. He had written the "*Chronique de Metz*" in verse. An anonymous continuator describes his course and violent death, cautiously declining to say whether it was right or wrong:—

" Et brulé fut de leurs conclus,
Fut tord (t) ou droict, j n'en dis plus."

In Strasburg, Lambert did not forget the spiritual condition of his countrymen. He turned to every quarter within the reach of his active correspondence in the hope of finding an entrance for the truth. Writing to the King of France, in August, 1524, he says:—

" Permit that the pure Word of God may have among your subjects free course, that the preachers may be truly evangelical, and that the books that make known Christ may be printed even in the vulgar tongue, and freely circulated in your kingdom. I beseech you, close not the granaries of the pure Word of God. There is no one to break and distribute to them the bread of the Word. The granaries are full of wheat: this I can say, for I found it so myself. Even in France there are many of the faithful who know and possess the truth, but whose mouth is closed by the bishops and the monks of Antichrist. Feeble as I am, I would

Letter to
the King of
France,
1524.

* Herminjard, i. 231; Autograph Bib. Publ. Geneve, vol. No. iii. a.

myself come to France, if the conspirators of Antichrist did not oppose themselves, and if I might proclaim there the glory of the Lord; but that, if they could put their hand on me, my mouth would soon be closed—as I found by experience when I was four months in Metz. Since, then, I could not promise myself any success there, I am come to Strasburg—that city in which the Lord has caused the light of his Word to shine. Here I wait until it shall please God to recall me to Metz, or to some other city of France.”*

Similar letters were written by Lambert to Henri Cornelius Agrippa, the prince-bishop of Lausanne, to the senate of Besancon and others.

Lambert was not permitted to preach the gospel in France. His translations and general writings were widely circulated, but no opportunity was given to him for personal evangelization. He continued his biblical studies in Strasburg under great difficulties. He was compelled to appeal to the council of Strasburg to furnish him with the common necessities of life. The following entry in the registers of the council of Strasburg shows that some attention was given to his petition: “Dr. Lambert presents a book which he has written on the four prophets, and which he offers to my lords as a little token of gratitude for the favours of my lords, and implores further help. Resolved, that the two lords who have already treated with those of St. Jean and of Chartreux, enter into a friendly agreement to support him another year, and that they inform Dr. Francis that he may arrange accordingly. If he will not or cannot do this, he must not be left to die of hunger, but receive maintenance at the expense of the

Biblical
studies.
Personal
trials.

* Herminjard, i. 257.

Cloisters, in order to have him at hand, if necessary, to establish schools." *

"Formerly," said Lambert, "when I was a hypocrite, I lived in abundance. Now I consume frugally my daily bread with my small family. But I had rather be poor in Christ's kingdom than possess abundance of gold in the dissolute dwellings of the Pope." †

But these sad days of penury—doubly painful from the anxiety and care borne by the Christian heroine who shared his privations—were nearly over, and the time was at hand when the earnest student and devoted evangelist might labour on without the constant fear of pinching want.

James Sturm, of Strasburg, at the Diet of Spires, met Philip of Hesse, and spoke to him of Lambert; and gave such a report of his ^{Lambert at Marburg.} zeal and fidelity to the cause of Christ, that the landgrave invited him to his court at Marburg.

Lambert had now the opportunity to challenge public attention to his ecclesiastical views. He drew up one hundred and fifty-eight ^{Paradoxes.} propositions, which he entitled "Paradoxes," and posted them at the church-doors. The first sentence of the placard indicates the spirit of the whole:—

"*All that is deformed ought to be reformed.*" And in unison with this declaration, he continued: "The Word of God alone teaches what ought to be so, and reform that is effected otherwise is vain." "It belongs to the Church to judge on matters of faith. Now, *the Church is the congregation of those who are united by the same spirit, the same faith, the same God, the same Mediator, the same Word, by which alone they are governed, and in which alone they have life.*" ^{Congregational Church.}

* Herminjard, i. 417.

† Lambert Commentarii de Sacro Conjugio.

"The Word of God is the true key. The kingdom of heaven is open to him who believes the Word, and shut again to him who believes it not. *Whoever, therefore, truly possesses the Word of God has the power of the keys. All other keys, all the decrees of councils and Popes, and all the rules of the monks, are of no value.*

"Since the priesthood of the law has been abolished, Christ is the only ever-living and eternal Priest, and He does not, like men, need a successor. Neither the Bishop of Rome, nor any other person in the world, is his representative here below. But all Christians, since the commencement of the Church, have been and are participators in his priesthood."

There was great excitement in Homberg, which increased as the day for the grand debate drew near.

On the 21st of October, at seven in the morning, the gates of the principal church of the city were thrown open, which Philip entered at the head of a long procession of ecclesiastics, nobles, knights, and deputies. Lambert explained his theses, and challenged all opponents. After a prolonged and profound silence, Nicolas Ferber, superior of the Franciscans, stood forth as the champion of his party. As he proceeded in his reply, he began to appeal to Augustin, Peter Lombard, and the doctors, when the landgrave interrupted him by saying, "Do not put forward the wavering opinions of men, but the Word of God, which alone fortifies and strengthens our hearts."

Neither the Franciscan nor any of his monkish brethren, were at home in a scriptural argument. They declined, therefore, to reply. Lambert rose to continue the disputation to the astonishment of his adversary, who refused to answer what he called "thunders of blasphemy and lightnings of impiety."

Debate on
Ecclesiasti-
cal polity.

The triumph of Lambert was complete ; clasping his hands he exclaimed, "Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, for He hath visited and redeemed his people."

The landgrave was so convinced of the soundness of Lambert's propositions, that he permitted a commission of Christian men to meet in ^{Lambert's} order to frame a new ecclesiastical consti- ^{articles.} tution. After the labour of three days the synod published a document, of which the following are the principal articles :—

"The Church can only be taught and governed by the Word of its chief shepherd. Whoever has recourse to any other Word shall be deposed and excommunicated.

"Every pious man learned in the Word of God, whatever be his condition, may be elected bishop if he desire it, for he is called inwardly of God.

"Let no one believe that by a bishop we understand anything than a simple minister of the Word of God.

"Ministers are servants, and consequently they ought not to be lords, princes, and governors. Let the faithful assemble and choose their bishops and deacons. Each church should elect its own pastor. Let those who are elected bishops be set apart to their office by the imposition of the hands of three bishops : and as for the deacons, if there are no ministers present, let them receive the laying on hands from the elders of the church.

"If a bishop cause any scandal to the church by his effeminacy, by the splendour of his garments, or by levity of conduct, and if, on being warned, he persists, let him be deposed by the Church.

"Let each church place its bishops in a condition to live with his family, and to be hospitable, as St. Paul enjoins, but let the bishops exact nothing for their casual duties.

"On every Sunday let there be, in some suitable place, an assembly of all the men who are in the number of the saints, to regulate with the bishop according to God's Word, all the affairs of the church, and to excommunicate whoever gives occasion to the

scandal of the church ; for the Church of Christ has never existed without exercising the power of excommunication.

“As a weekly assembly is necessary for the direction of the particular churches, so a general synod shall be held annually for the direction of all the churches in the country. All the pastors are its natural members, but *each church shall further elect from its body a man full of the spirit and of faith, to whom it shall entrust its powers for all that is in the jurisdiction of the synod.*

“Three visitors shall be elected yearly, with commission to go through all the churches, to examine those who have been approved of, and to provide for the execution of the decrees of the synod.”*

These regulations were adopted mainly at the suggestion of Lambert. We find the principles on which they were based, advocated in his different writings. He insists strongly that a true minister must have a twofold call to the work ; that which is internal by the influence of the Holy Spirit, and that which is outward by the voice of the Church distinctly and formally given. Any man, he said, might have the external call, but that which is within can only be received from God, and unless there is proof of this divine vocation, every appointment to office in the Church is utterly invalid. Lambert was one of the earliest confessors at the dawn of the Reformation to explode the notion of a sacrificing priesthood in connection with the Christian ministry. He held the doctrine of the universal priesthood of believers to offer spiritual sacrifices ; but he maintained that there was no scriptural ground whatever for sacerdotalism. *No man living, he says, neither the Pope nor his bishops, nor yet angels and men combined, can deprive Christian believers of the right of Church-fellowship, or justly con-*

* Merle D'Aubigne and Schwinke, *Monumenta Hessica*, vol. ii. p. 588.

demn them for its exercise, unless it can be first clearly shown that they are disqualified by the testimony of the Word of God.

The rules for the government of the Church proposed by Lambert were too minute and formal, and he assigned a place to the magistrate beyond his legitimate province. Nevertheless, practical hints were given in his system of Church polity that led in subsequent times to a more careful attention to the scriptural model; his platform was not Presbyterian though Synodal.

The landgrave of Hesse founded a university at Marburg, close under the walls of his ancient castle. Amongst other professors, as Montanus, Feige, Erhard Schnepf Hermann von dem Busche, Lambert, in 1527, was placed at the head of the theological faculty. Marburg became a centre of influence by the teaching of its professors, and the printing-press more widely extended than ecclesiastical historians have recognized.

University
founded at
Marburg,
1527.

The views of Lambert on ecclesiastical polity were not in accordance with those of the great Saxon reformer. Luther hoped for restoration to the Church of Rome, by the mitigation of abuses, the diffusion of religious knowledge, and the sound conversion of the priests and people. On the question of the Lord's Supper, though for a time Lambert acquiesced in the views of Luther, he yielded to the scriptural proofs and convincing arguments of Zwingle and Œcolampadius at the conference in Marburg, which will shortly come before our attention.

The position of Lambert as that of antagonism

in some respects, to his friends and patrons at Wittenberg, was one of considerable trial. Writing to Myconius he says: "Since I have known Christ, and He has called me to the gospel, I have never desired either to control any one, or to be guided myself by my own opinions. It has been my wish, and I have endeavoured, according to my ability, to be led myself, and to direct others by the Word of God. I have been pained when my opinions, or those of others, have been put in the place of the divine Word. Hence I have oftentimes admonished and blamed them. I wish not to domineer over any one, but simply to adhere to the inspired record in matters of faith and practice."*

Lambert felt deeply concerned because of the slow progress of the Reformation. "When will the time come," he says, "when we shall see ourselves instructed in the divine Word? We have overthrown and destroyed many things, what have we built up in their place? We have cast down the Pope of Rome and his tawdry princes. The cloisters and the monastic orders are abolished, church ceremonies and mummeries are done away with, but this is not enough. Where is the proper and simple observance of the Lord's Supper? Where is the equitable and proper provision for those who hold office in the Church?"†

In a letter to Bucer, dated Marburg, March 14th, 1530, Lambert gives a touching account of his experience, and of the state of his affairs. No answer, he says, has been given to the book he has written on the Lord's Supper,

* Hassencamp.

† Hassencamp.

though Krafft and Schnepf have had it in their possession for several months, and engaged to furnish a written reply. The landgrave has frequently brought the opposing parties to discuss the question before him, and always to the discomfiture of the Lutherans. The truth has so far prevailed that its adversaries can scarcely breathe. Every day, throughout the Hessian territory, some relinquish the Lutheran opinions on the question. Lambert tells Bucer, that those who follow not the *truth* but *men*, circulate the report that the brethren in Strasburg are unwilling to continue the controversy, and intimate to the people that, as they have no definite convictions on the subject, it may be left entirely open. Adam Krafft and Schnepf, in particular, have expressly said, that they heard Bucer himself make a public announcement to this effect. This story Lambert will not credit; but, whoever may change his opinion, he will hold firmly by the truth. He then enters into a recital of his personal sorrows. Though no longer suffering want, he is feeble in health and sick at heart, and has the yearnings of an exile to spend the remnant of his days in the country where he can once more hear the people around him speak his native tongue. More than this, he has the most intense desire to communicate with freedom the things which he has been divinely taught to his neighbours. He is acquainted with four languages, but he cannot preach to the people of Hesse in their own language, and their condition fills him with sadness; their manners excite his horror. He has been diligently occupied in writing Latin commentaries, and so long as there

were no special indications that another course was opened to him by the hand of Providence, he had felt it to be his duty to continue in his vocation, and to exercise the most conscientious care in the composition and revision of his works; but now he longs to be in some small town in Switzerland, where his family might dwell amongst those who fear God, and he could daily instruct the inhabitants. "Try," he says to Bucer and Capito, "to find me a place in which I may teach the people." He then commends to the sympathy of Bucer the bearer of the letter, who had shared the fare of his own humble dwelling for some time, but who was on his way to the Argentine Republic, in the hope of finding provision, being incapacitated for any hard work by his imprisonment for conscience' sake and the tortures he had suffered in Tournay. In conclusion he says: "Busche, our Eybachius, Sebastian, and other brethren, salute thee. My wife salutes thee, who before, in the question of the Supper, differed from me in opinion, the Lord has turned, and we are now of one mind. To Him be the glory. I, with these, salute Capito—Anthony Sebastian (Meyer), Martin Hedio, Symphorien (Pollion), Mathias (Zell), Lathomas (Steinlin), and the honourable Daniel Mueg, Knybsand, Conrad Joham, and other brethren in the Lord, not forgetting their wives. Peace be to you all in the Lord our God, through Jesus Christ our Lord. From Marburg, on the Monday after the Lord's-day called '*Reminiscere*.' I have written these things hastily in the night, and in the midst of many engagements. You will have the goodness to allow, therefore, for any rudeness and negligence of style.

My dearly-beloved Gilbert (Winram) the Scot, salutes you."*

In a postscript Lambert writes: "After concluding my letter, a messenger comes with the sad tidings of the removal from us of our most excellent brother Stephen and his son by the plague. His loss will be felt by the prince (by whom he was much beloved). I have written this that, if needful, you may admonish those to whom the care of his affairs belongs. Pray for us. Amongst us this contagion almost everywhere, in town and country, seizes the strongest, and many are taken away. The Lord be merciful to us. His holy will be done."

Lambert himself was not many steps from his heavenly home, with its perfect, joyful, and endless service. He died on the 18th of April, and his wife and children soon followed him to the land of rest.

Lambert's
death.

Lambert did not live in vain. It was a source of continual pain to him that he was so restricted and hindered; but far beyond his calculations the influence of his example was felt beneficially, and the day may come when, in a general return to primitive purity of doctrine and simplicity of worship, his consistent testimony will be regarded with deeper interest than the tumultuous agitation of men of greater genius, and far more prominent, who had not the same devoted allegiance to the truth. The Christian brethren intimately associated with him imbibed his spirit, and caught the flame of his zeal. We have examples of this especially in ANEMOND DE COCT and PATRICK HAMILTON.

Lambert was not permitted personally to preach

* Autograph, Arch de Zurich.

the gospel in France, but his friend Anemond, in his short but most zealous career, spared no pains nor labour to disseminate the truth, the preciousness of which he had been made to feel. After persuading

Anemond Luther to write a letter to Francis I.,
in Basle. Anemond returned to Basle, where he met

Farel, from whom he had received the gospel in his native Dauphiny, and other Christian refugees from France. He was consumed with the desire to evangelize his own countrymen. "All that I am," he said, "all that I shall be, all that I have, and all that I shall have, I desire to consecrate to the glory of God."* Before leaving Wittenberg he wrote a preface to a treatise of Lambert,† August, 1523, in which he says :—

"The majesty of the divine Word is so great that it remains for ever invincible, whatever may be the assaults of the world directed against it. Princes have often been enraged against it, and it has been furiously assaulted by the
His preface
to Lam-
bert's book. 'gates of hell,' but it grows and prevails with so much vigour that it is exposed to further persecutions.

To render the truth invincible the Son of Man endured the pains of death. But it ought not to surprise us, since Christ Himself has predicted this, that in our days the 'last times' his mystical body, which is the Church, should be found in a state of dissolution and of death; for Christ has been cast into the shade, His Word altered, the gospel defiled and perverted by impious doctrines and blasphemies, and the Church is torn by the teeth of pernicious papal laws, and fastened by nails stronger than the iron of a gibbet, and worse than a cross. The Church no sooner now begins with difficulty to revive and to recover herself, but as ever the priests, the Scribes and the Pharisees, the false Christs, the sophists, and the monks begin again to oppress and to stifle her. The same men who dragged to the stake—for the sake of the Word of God—John Huss and Jerome of Prague, have quite

* Merle D'Aubigne; Coct, Epp. Neuchâtel, MS.

† Evangelici in Minoritarum regulam Commentarii.

recently burnt in Brussels new martyrs of Christ who remained stedfast unto death in the confession of their faith. Their crime in the eyes of the Romish Church (constituted of the impious and wicked) consists in their putting in peril the kingdom of the Pope, and he has caused them to perish in the fire. This Lycaon of Rome shrinks from nothing to maintain his tyranny. He arrogates and usurps the title of Pontiff, which, according to the testimony of St. Paul, belongs to Christ alone; and that nothing may be wanting to lend support to that fiction, he is adorned as the ancient chief of the flamines of Jupiter, with the title of Sovereign Pontiff, making himself impudently the equal and even the superior of Jesus the great High Priest.

"But we see, thanks be to God, a good number of the followers of the Son of Perdition returning from day to day to better sentiments, who lend an ear to the invitation of the Most High, who calls to them by the mouth of Jeremiah, 'Remove out of the midst of Babylon and go forth out of the land of Chaldeans, and be as the he-goats before the flocks. For lo, I will raise and cause to come against Babylon an assembly of great nations from the north country, and they shall set themselves in array against her.' Among those who have listened to that appeal may be found our dear Francis Lambert, who strives with all his zeal to realize the passage in the Apocalypse, where it is said, 'Let him that heareth say, Come.'"

In November, 1523, Anemond went to Zurich to induce Zwingle, in imitation of the example of Luther, to write a letter to Seville. Zwingle complied with his request, and wrote an epistle, dated December 13th, 1523, which Anemond printed for circulation. Zwingle in this friendly address says:—

Anemond
in Zurich,
1523.

"One in the faith, one in spirit, and having the same regard for piety, we have entered into relations one with another, our common design being to restore the religion of Christ, which has for so long a time been disfigured and almost annihilated. From the small seed that has been sown, God will cause to spring up a great tree. That seed is the Word of God, and it is God himself who has inspired

Zwingle's
address to
Seville.

you with the desire to communicate it to others. But before you enter on that work, count the cost, for if you are a faithful servant of God you will have to encounter many foes. The accusations of heresies and the most cruel punishments Antichrist will employ as weapons to reduce us to despair for the preaching of the gospel. Have you the strength to contend with him and with so many other adversaries? You will flee from the first direct blow if the Spirit of Christ does not impart strength equal to all these dangers to excite your courage. Put on, then, all the Christian armour for to conquer surely; you must not listen to the flesh, your spirit must live in God alone. You desire to preach the gospel, study then the Scripture as a learner and not as a teacher. See what the love of Christ has accomplished in so short a time in Germany. Pray in your turn to the Lord for France. He loves to hear the voice of prayer."

Anemond received a letter from Seville, dated Grenoble, 28th December, 1524, in which he says :—

"I have received your letter and that of Zwingle, to which I reply. You must know that Satan is destroying the fruit of the gospel in France by degrees, and even in Grenoble of those of whom you have hope, are vacillating and stand alone; and for myself, I am forbidden to preach on pain of death. We may meet in secret to confer together on the gospel, and nothing is said; but we may not speak publicly except to be burnt. The Thomists have determined to proceed against me by inquisition, and to take me prisoner; and if it were not for certain secret friends I should be put into the hands of these Pharisees. I say not that these are not so marvellously zealous for the gospel, but they are few in number."*

These tidings only increased the ardour of Anemond. He would make any sacrifice, or incur the greatest personal hazard, so that the gospel might be made known in France. In conjunction with Michael Bertin, he tried to establish a printing-press in Basle, and began to

Seville's
reply to
Anemond,
1524.

Printing-
press in
Basle.

* Herminjard. Bib : Neufchatel MSS.

translate the works of the German Reformers into French. His own plans were not carried out; but a book-society was formed, under the direction of Farel, and Anemond superintended the printing. The New Testament in French, and other books, were sent out by colporteurs, who went from town to town, and from village to village, in Franche-Comté, Lorraine, Burgundy, and the adjacent provinces. In a business note, Anemond says to Farel (Basle, 18th November, 1524):—

“Pellican has seen the ‘Epistle,’ and it pleases him exceedingly. I have defended that which has been done, offering upon it my life. At Walsnut they have taken away all the images. I have seen a copy of the ‘Latin Bible,’ printed in columns, which is now being brought out at Wittenberg, and the ‘Book of Job’ and the ‘Psalter’ in German. I have not found the Catechism, but I send you ‘*De Modo Orandi*,’ with another work of Pellican which he addressed to the Rotterdam monster. I pray you that this book may be carefully kept. You can send it to Pellican. It is all his own, as you will see.

“I have seen to-day, at the house of Conrad (Resch), a New Testament, bought of the printer the 12th of October, in French, corrected by Stapula. Conrad will reprint it in many copies; for I doubt not, as I have said, that a very great number may be disposed of. I have spoken to him of the French books that you have, and he seems inclined, after the New Testament is printed, to give your orders to Brother Michael Bertin. Do not write to him, nor to any one, but by a very trusty, worthy messenger. I will try again to find you a Catechism. I salute in Jesus Christ Mons. le Chevalier d’Esch, the house of my host, and all the Church. Salute as from me your helper in Christ, John Gayling—most dear to me, and to whom, when I have leisure, I will write. Salute the noble and learned in Christ whom you know. The Lord be with you.”*

It was needful to take the utmost care in correspondence. Letters were often sent without address,

* Neufchâtel MSS.

and particulars that could not be written were left to be explained by the faithful messenger.

Myconius, in a letter to Anemond from Zurich (1525), says :—

“I have been surprised not to see you here with Ulric of Wittenberg ; and, as I do not know whether you are at Basle or at Montbeliard, I have not been able to write to Myconius to you. Your devotedness to the cause of Christ has Anemond. made you an exile from Dauphiny, expelled by the servants of Antichrist. But be of good courage. Your very presence in the midst of us proves that you have boldly done your part in the cause of the gospel. The tyranny of Christian bishops will compel the people at last to regard them only as liars. Persevere. The time is not far distant when we shall enter the haven of rest, whether it be that the tyrants strike us, or that they themselves are smitten. All will be well with us then, if we be but faithful to Jesus Christ.”*

Anemond was young, full of zeal, and fertile in resources ; but his course was quickly run. Sebastian Wagner, in a short note to Farel from 1525. Schaffhausen, March, 1525, says : “Our friend Anemond is very seriously ill. We have despaired of his life ; but just now he is rather better, and appeals to you for fraternal aid. He fears, I suppose, the failure of his pecuniary means. The young man who brings this will give you all particulars, and you can entrust him with a letter in return.”

The exile for Jesus was near home. On the 25th of March, Myconius wrote to Farel : “Anemond is gone to Him who will supply all his need. He will want no more. Let us live in such a manner that we may enter into the rest which we hope the spirit of Anemond now enjoys. Remember

Death of
Anemond.

* Neuchâtel MSS.

his adopted son. Care tenderly for the boy. I press this the more because my own means are such that I cannot provide for him.”*

PATRICK HAMILTON,† a pupil of Francis Lambert at Marburg, was not less devoted to the cause of Christ; and his testimony had an influence in Scotland equally remarkable with that of Patrick Hamilton. Anemond and his coadjutors in France. The name of Patrick Hamilton appears in the registry of the university of Marburg in conjunction with those of John Hamilton of Linlithgow, and Gilbert Winram of Edinburgh. Lambert was warmly attached to Patrick Hamilton. In the dedication of one of his works to the landgrave, he says :—

“You had last year, in your new university of Marburg, one who brought glory to God in his own Church—Patrick Hamilton, descended from a family of the highest rank in Scotland, and nearly allied in blood with the royal house. When he was about three and twenty, his learning was of no common order, and his judgment in divine truth was eminently clear and solid. His object in coming to your university was to confirm himself more abundantly in the truth, and I can truly say that I have seldom met with any one who conversed on the Word of God with greater spirituality and earnestness of feeling. He often talked with me upon these subjects. He was one of three who came from Scotland, but, more vigorous in piety and established in the truth, he returned to his native land to become its first and most illustrious apostle. He was all on fire with zeal to confess the name of Christ, and he has offered himself to God as a holy living sacrifice. He brought into the Church of God, not only all the splendour of his station, but his life itself. Such is the flower of surpassing sweetness—yea, the ripe fruit, which your university has produced in its very commencement. You have not been disappointed of your wishes. You founded the school with the desire that from it might go forth intrepid con-

* Neufchatel MSS.

† Prof. Lorimer, Historical Biography of Patrick Hamilton.

fessors of Christ, and steadfast witnesses of his truth. See you have one such already—an example in many ways distinguished. Others, if the Lord will, will soon follow.”

Like Francis Lambert and Anemond, Patrick Hamilton, when brought to value the gospel himself, could not rest without some direct personal effort for the salvation of the people of his own country. Whilst at Marburg he wrote a series of theological propositions, which were afterward translated and published by John Frith, the martyr, and called “Patrick’s Places.” At the close of his theses he exclaimed in the presence of the students at Marburg : “We have a good and gentle Lord. He doeth all for nought. Let us follow his footsteps whom all the world ought to praise and magnify.” In the spirit of this sentiment he resolved to leave Germany, and to go at once to his native land to bear testimony for Christ. John Hamilton and Gilbert Winram tried to dissuade him from this course, but in vain.

He arrived in Scotland in the autumn of 1527, and began immediately to preach in the family mansion occupied by his brother, Sir James, at Kincavel. “The bright beams of the true light,” says Knox, “which, by God’s grace, was planted in his heart, began most abundantly to burst forth as well in public as in secret.” “Wheresoever he came,” says Spottiswood, “he spared not to lay open the corruptions of the Romish Church, and to show the errors crept into the Christian religion; whereunto many gave ear, and a great following he had, both for his learning, and a courteous behaviour to all sorts

Return of
Hamilton
to Scotland,
1527.

of people." He was married in January, 1258, and soon after received a treacherous invitation to teach in the university of St. Andrews. Marriage, 1528. The prior of the Dominican monastery met him in conference, and it was arranged that he should hold a disputation with Alexander Alane,* one of the canons of the priory, and received from it deep impressions of the truth. Conference at St. Andrews. Cardinal Beaton kept his eye on the young evangelist, and by various steps brought him ultimately to a trial and condemnation for martyrdom. Alesius, who was an eye-witness of the scene, tells us that in the course of the examination Friar Campbell said to him: "Heretic! thou saidst it was lawful to all men that have souls, to read the Word of God, and that they are able to understand the same, and in particular, the latter will and testament of Christ Jesus, whereby they may acknowledge their sins, and repent of the same, and amend their lives by faith and repentance, and come to the mercy of God by Christ Jesus. Now, heretic," said Campbell, "I see that thou affirmest the words of thy accusation." On his way to the place of martyrdom, he carried, in his right hand, a copy of the Evangelists, and was accompanied by his servant, and a few intimate friends. When he came in sight of the spot, he uncovered his head, and lifting up his eyes to heaven, prayed for a martyr's strength and victory. On reaching the stake, he handed to one of his friends the precious volume, and taking off his cap, and gown, and upper garments, he gave them to his attendant, with the

* Called also Ales and Alesius.

words: "These will not profit in the fire; they will profit thee. After this, of me thou canst receive no commodity, except the example of my death, which, I pray thee, bear in mind; for albeit it be bitter to the flesh and fearful before men, yet it is the entrance to eternal life, which none shall possess that denies Christ before this wicked generation." His sufferings were protracted for six hours: "but during all the time," says Alesius "the martyr never gave one sign of impatience or anger, nor ever called to heaven for vengeance upon his persecutors; so great was his faith, so strong his confidence in God."

His death caused a deep sensation throughout the kingdom: "Almost," says Knox, "within the whole realm, there was none found who began not to inquire, 'Wherefore was Master Patrick Hamilton burnt? and where his articles were rehearsed?' question was holden, if such articles were necessary to be believed under the pain of damnation? And so within short space many began to call in doubt that which before they had held for a certain verity." The event caused great exultation amongst the priests at Louvain. The university of Marburg wept in sympathy, but shared with the martyr the feeling of holy triumph. A colony of reformers, in Sweden, Reformers in Sweden. said in a letter by one of their number: "Patrick Hamilton they put cruelly to death; but now, he lives with Christ, whom he confessed before the princes of this world; but the voice of his blood cries yet with the blood of Abel to the heavens." Fully to exhibit the influence of this faithful martyr would be to write the history of the

Reformation in Scotland. The manner in which his testimony was transmitted to all classes of the people, with convincing effect, may be distinctly traced for several generations. In that unbroken line of witnesses we find JOHN ROUGH, a colleague of whom Gillaume, or Williams, is said to have been the first man from whom JOHN KNOX received any taste of the truth. The manner in which Knox was called to the work of the ministry is interesting, as indicative of a tendency to the Congregational order. Finding himself exposed to persecution, Knox resolved to leave Scotland, and to visit the schools of Germany ; but at the instance of a gentleman who wished to commit to him the charge of his sons, he consented to remain at St. Andrews. He read and expounded the Gospel of John with so much acceptance that his hearers urged him to engage in the work of the ministry. Knox declined the sacred office, saying, " That he would not run where God had not called him." The brethren conferred among themselves, and at the suggestion of John Rough, one of their number, it was determined to give him an open and solemn call to the office on a certain day. *Rough gave a discourse on the election of ministers, and showed the power that any Christian congregation had, whatever its paucity of numbers, above any single patron, to invite any man in whom they recognized a fitness for ministerial labours ; and how grave was the responsibility of the Christian teacher to refuse the voice of those who expressed in this way their desire to be instructed. Having expressed these general sentiments,*

John
Rough.

Call of John
Knox to
the minis-
try by a
Congrega-
tional
Church.

the preacher turned to Knox, who sat in the assembly, and said with thrilling emphasis, "Brother, ye shall not be offended that I speak unto you that which I have in charge, even from all that are here present, which is, in the name of God, and of his Son Jesus Christ, and in the name of those that call you by my mouth. I charge you that ye refuse not this holy vocation, but that ye tender the glory of God, the increase of Christ's kingdom, the edification of your brethren, and the comfort of me, whom ye understand well enough to be oppressed by the multitude of labours, that ye take upon you the public office and charge of preaching, even as ye look to avoid God's heavy displeasure, to desire that He shall multiply his graces with you." After an impressive pause, John Rough then said to the congregation: "Was not this your charge to me, and do ye not approve this vocation?" The token of assent was given; "Whereat," Knox himself tells us that, "abashed, he byrst forth in moast abundant teares, and withdrew himself to his chalmer."

CHAPTER XIV.

THE restoration of the Lord's Supper to its primitive form at the time of the Reformation, was mainly effected by the writings and personal influence of ZWINGLE and ~~ECOLAMPADIUS~~, ^{Zwingle and Ecolampadius.} whose course in relation to principles of church polity we have now to consider. The admirers of ULRICH ZWINGLE attribute the noble traits of his character to the influence of the scenes and associations of the mountainous region in which he spent the days of his childhood and early youth. ^{Birth-place of Zwingle.} Wildhaus, his native village, is situated on the upper slope of the Toggenberg, a valley beneath the crest of Mount Sentis, more than 2,000 feet above Lake Zurich. The river Thur runs through this valley, and finds an outlet, meeting the morning rays of the sun, at its eastern extremity. To the south are the mountain summits called the seven electors; to the west the green hills of the Toggenberg; and to the east the snow-capped heights of the Borarlberg. We are told by writers of the "picturesque" school, that in Zwingle was an under-current of serenity like the peaceful vale below his humble parental dwelling, and at the same time a freshness and richness as pleasing as the living green that skirted the hills around him;

and to make the resemblance complete, we learn that there were rough points in his character corresponding with the craggy rocks and beetling cliffs that met his view as he watched his father's flocks. We do not place entire confidence in this pleasing theory as to the formation of Zwingli's character. It is more probable that his course as an ecclesiastical reformer was determined by his early training, and the circumstances through which he passed at a critical and transitionary period in the history of the Swiss Republic. The priests, when Zwingli entered on his public career, were grossly ignorant. Ignorance of the priests. "In a synod," Bullinger tells us, "only three were found who had read the Bible; the others confessed that they were scarcely acquainted with the New Testament. Their sermons were miserable amplifications of the legend, enlivened with buffooneries worthy the stage of a mountebank, or absurd declamations on the merit and utility of certain superstitious practices. Those who possessed some learning, more occupied with the purpose of displaying it than of edifying their audience, mingled in a whimsical manner the metaphysics of Aristotle with the doctrine of Christ. Most of the secular priests were either incapable of composing a discourse, or would not give themselves the trouble. They contented themselves with learning sermons written by monks, which they retailed again without regard to time or place, to the circumstances or the wants of their flocks. In the other functions of their office they took no interest, except inasmuch as they tended to augment their revenues; and irregularity of morals was so frequent among

them, that they did not even attempt to conceal their deviations.”*

In this time of general laxity of morals and of mental sloth, Zwingli became a bright example of conscientious diligence and of well-regulated zeal in the pursuit of learning. He was sent in his tenth year to the Theodora school at Basle, under the care of Gregory Binzli, and after making rapid progress there he was removed in a short time to a school of polite literature at Berne, to enjoy the tuition of Henry Lupulus, one of the most cultivated men then in Switzerland. After spending two years in this preparatory training, it was determined to send him for the study of philosophy to Vienna. On his return from the university in that city, he became a teacher at Basle, and at the same time continued his classical studies with unabated ardour.

In 1505 Thomas Wittenbach came to Basle as teacher of theology and the higher branches of scholastic learning. From him Zwingli first obtained more correct ideas of Scripture doctrine and interpretation, and was led to a more accurate study of Greek. After spending four years of academic life in Basle, Zwingli received an invitation to become a village pastor at Glarus. According to the theory of the formative influence of natural scenery, Zwingli at this place would become most profound, for it is “at the bottom of a rounded valley closely hemmed in on all sides by lofty mountains almost vertical in front, and with many of their heads covered with snow. It

* Hess, pp. 23, 24.

gives one a shudder to look to those snowy mountain barriers rising upwards of 7,000 feet, from which, when in the town, you see no outlet, more especially when you think of the place in winter, as the snow lies more than four months in the streets, and the sun is only visible for four hours in the day." Here

*Studies of
Zwingle.*

Zwingle willingly buried himself as a profound student, yet winning the confidence and affection of his parishioners by the assiduous fulfilment of his pastoral duties. He devoted his attention chiefly to the study of the Scriptures, but he read also with great care the fathers and the writings of Erasmus, Waldus, Huss, Wycliffe, Pico

*Eminence
as a
preacher.*

Mirandola, and others. He soon became eminent as a preacher. "He was," says Schuler, "a preacher for all ranks of the men of his age. For he spake out of the heart concerning those objects which are demanded by the nature of all, the wisest as well as the weakest; and in clear strong language, which bears the impress of the truth, and enlightens every sound understanding and heart at the first view."* "His style," Bullinger tells us, "was unaffected, simple, and clear. There was nothing low and grovelling. It was full of animation and of massive force, and it was impressed with an irresistible charm. His exposition of Scripture was striking, acute, pious, incomparable."

Twice Zwingle was called from his parochial duties at Glarus to accompany the Swiss troops as chaplain into Italy, and in this military experience he made himself thoroughly conversant with public

* Schuler, s. 314, 315.

affairs; and, in the spirit of the purest patriotism, urged his countrymen to abandon their ruinous policy as hired mercenaries, and to direct their attention to the proper interests of their country. The fidelity with which he remonstrated against prevalent vices roused opposition to him at Glarus; and, in the summer of 1516, he removed to Einsiedeln, a secluded spot in a somewhat sterile valley in the canton of

Zwingle a
military
chaplain.

Einsiedeln,
1516.

Schweitz. The chapel at this place was resorted to by myriads of pilgrims for the entire absolution of their sins, as a shrine said to be "consecrated by angels." The promoters of this shameful imposture pretended to show the prints left by the celestial visitants, and gave out that Christ Himself consecrated the church during the night, while the angels sung, and the Holy Virgin suddenly appeared at the altar like a flash of lightning. Never at a loss for a lying invention, they gave in addition a circumstantial report of the saints who took part in the service. "St. Peter, and the holy Augustine, and Ambrose, figured in the procession on the occasion. Stephen read the epistle, the blessed Lawrence the gospel, and the holy Michael was the preacher." * The pilgrimage yielded an immense revenue, and to keep up the profitable delusion, Leo VIII. issued a bull to affirm the truth of the legend on papal authority.

Amidst the scenes of wild excitement around him, Zwingle continued his biblical studies, and interested Theobald von Geroldseck, the administrator of the abbey; Conrad of Rechenberg, the abbot; with Francis

Fellow
students of
Zwingle.

* Hartmannus Annales Heremi Dei, p. 50.

Zingk, a chaplain of the Apostolic See, and John Oechslin, in the same inquiries. They read together the Fathers, with the works of Valla, Reuchlin, and Erasmus. The time arrived when Zwingle felt constrained to make the most distinct and open declaration of his convictions. Called to preach in the abbey to an immense concourse of pilgrims, after an appropriate exordium, he said :—

Zwingle's
sermon on
Pilgrimage.

“Cease to believe that God resides in this temple more than in every other place. Whatever region of the earth you may inhabit, He is near you, He surrounds you, He grants your prayers, if they are proper to be granted ; but it is not by useless vows, by long pilgrimages, offerings destined to adorn senseless images, that you can obtain the divine favour. Resist temptations, repress guilty desires, shun all injustice, relieve the unfortunate, console the afflicted ; these are the works pleasing to the Lord. Alas ! I know it ; it is ourselves, ministers of the altar—we, who ought to be the salt of the earth—who have led into a maze of error the ignorant and credulous multitude. In order to accumulate treasures sufficient to satisfy our avarice, we raised vain and useless practices to the rank of good works ; and the Christians of our times, too docile to our instructions, neglect to fulfil the laws of God, and only think of making atonement for their crimes instead of renouncing them. ‘Let us live according to our desires,’ say they ; ‘let us enrich ourselves with the goods of our neighbour ; let us not fear to stain our hands with blood and murder. We shall find easy expiations in the favour of the Church.’ Senseless men ! Do they think to obtain remission for their lies, their impurities, their adulteries, their homicides, their treacheries, by prayers recited in honour of the Queen of Heaven—as if she were the protectress of all evil-doers ? Undeceive yourselves, erring people ! The God of Justice suffers not Himself to be moved by words which the tongue utters and the heart disowns. In the day of trouble, put your trust in none but God, who created the heavens and the earth with a word. At the approach of death, invoke only Jesus

Christ, who has bought you with his blood, and is the sole Mediator between God and Man." *

Hedio, who was present on the occasion, and personally, much impressed by the discourse of Zwingli, says : "It was beautiful, fundamental, dignified, comprehensive, searching, truly evangelical—reminding one, in force of language and of spirit, of the old Fathers of the Church."

The astonished pilgrims awoke as from a dream. No opposition was raised against the intrepid preacher. Many hastened away in terror from the scene, returning home with the gifts and tapers which they had brought as votive offerings to the Virgin and saints. As they met bands of pilgrims on their way to Ensiedeln, they related to them what Zwingli had said, and persuaded them to turn back. On a subsequent occasion (August, 1518), the imposition practised by Samson, a Carmelite monk, who came to Switzerland, like Tetzl, to traffic in indulgences, called forth his stern and effectual rebukes. "Jesus Christ," he said in one of his sermons, "the Son of God, has said, '*Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.*' Is it not, then, audacious folly and perfect madness to say, on the contrary, 'Buy letters of indulgence! run to Rome! give to the monks; sacrifice to the priests: if you do all these things, I will absolve you from your sins'? Jesus Christ is the only offering; Jesus Christ is the only sacrifice; Jesus Christ is the only way." This agitation on the part of Zwingli and

The effect
of his
discourse.

Samson
and his in-
dulgences,
1518.

* Hess, p. 62, *seq.*

other reformers created great ferment amongst the people, who saw the evils they had suffered from the priests before they were "rooted and grounded" in the truth of the gospel.*

Zwingle, writing to Cardinal Schinner, says:—

"The new lights which have been diffused since the revival of letters, have lessened the credulity of the people, are opening their eyes to a number of superstitions, and will prevent them from blindly adopting what is taught them by priests equally destitute of virtue and of talent. *They begin loudly to blame the idleness of the monks, the ignorance of the priests, and the misconduct of the prelates, and will no longer give their confidence to people whom they cannot respect. If care be not taken the multitude will soon lose the only curb capable of restraining its passions, and will go on from one disorder to another. The danger increases every day, and delay may be fatal.*

A reformation ought to be begun immediately, but it ought to begin with superiors, and spread from them to their inferiors.

"If the princes of the Church would give the example, if they would return to themselves and to a conduct more conformable to the gospel; if *bishops were no longer seen to handle the sword instead of the crozier, prelates to put themselves at the head of their subjects, in order to wage inveterate war against each other; ecclesiastics of all ranks to dissipate in scandalous debauchery, the revenues of their benefices accumulated upon their heads; then we might raise our voices against the vices of the laity, without fearing their recriminations, and we might indulge some hopes of the amendment of the people. But a reform in manners is impossible, if you do not get rid of those swarms of pious idlers, who feed at the expense of the industrious citizen, and if you do not abolish those superstitious ceremonies and absurd dogmas equally calculated to shock the understanding of reasonable men, and to alarm the piety of the religious ones.*"†

Zwingle, scholar, orator, and theologian, was now the most prominent man in the Swiss Republic. His friends exerted themselves to obtain

* Zwingle. Opp. i. p. 222, p. 201.

† Schuler, pp. 257, 258.

him the important post of parish priest in the cathedral at Zurich, that he might combine with ministerial duties the functions of an ecclesiastical statesman or political leader. His election was secured on the 11th of December, 1518, by seventeen out of four and twenty votes. His position was one of peculiar difficulty, for he was not called to the pastoral office by Christian people of one mind, and ready to sustain him by their sympathies and prayer, but by an ecclesiastical corporation, who had but a very slender acquaintance with evangelical truth, and no very strong desire for further instruction. The provost of the chapter, in explaining to Zwingli the duties of his new appointment, said: "You must do your utmost endeavours to make the revenues of the chapter productive, without neglecting the minutest of them. You will exhort the faithful, both from the pulpit and in the confessional, to pay rents and tithes, and to show by their offerings that they love the Church. You will apply yourself to the multiplication of revenues proceeding from the sick, from offerings, and in general from all ecclesiastical acts. As for the administration of the sacraments, preaching, and being present among the people, these, too, form part of the duties of a priest. Nevertheless, you may employ a substitute in these various respects, and particular in preaching. You are not called upon to administer the sacrament except to persons of consideration, and upon being required to do so; you are interdicted from doing so without distinction of persons."*

* Schuler, p. 227.

Zwingle had no desire to be exempt from preaching; it was the work in which he took the deepest interest. The state of morals in Zurich was low; there was gross ignorance, and in many bitter hostility to evangelical truth; but the reformer for two years laboured unremittingly and with great zeal and discretion, to indoctrinate all classes of the people. Opposition seemed to stimulate him to more earnest efforts, and by a combination of tact with courage he became firmly established in his commanding position. Mellowed in Christian experience by a serious illness, his ministry became more instructive and more energetic. Many came to hear from all the cantons, who received the Word gladly. The influence of Zwingle's preaching was felt throughout Switzerland, and with a simple form of church polity and the maintenance of Christian discipline, the effects produced might have been as permanent as they were striking and extensive.

Influence of
his preach-
ing.

But Zwingle, fired with the ambition of gaining universal ascendancy for the Reformation, began to devise a scheme of government in which the State and the Church should be identical. He had, by the agency and influence of the Council of Two Hundred in Zurich, obtained emancipation for himself and the people from the Pope, and it occurred to him that with a little modification of this corporation, he might make a new ecclesiastical constitution, and gradually establish it throughout the republic. Not altogether free from the pride and intolerance of position, he turned his activities in this direction as one alive to his own

State
Church
scheme.

importance, whilst sincerely concerned on the whole for the advancement of the truth. He was associated in his career with a band of earnest and devoted coadjutors—Myconius, Stumpff, Leo Juda, Berthold, Haller, and others. In the course of their struggle several conferences or disputations were held with their opponents, and as they made progress, these discussions were intended as preliminary to the enforcement of the anticipated decision by some legal enactment or decree.

The Council of Zurich having yielded, in 1520, to the influence of those opposed to Zwingle, determined by a majority that the

Council of Zurich influenced by the monks.

monks were not to be preached against, but at a subsequent discussion, at the house of the provost, the committee decided that the gospel should be preached, and that Thomas and Scotus were of no weight. Emboldened by a series of successes gradually obtained, Zwingle, in 1523, impressed in his sermons, as well as by personal representations, the necessity of ordaining a public conference upon matters

Conference proposed by Zwingle, 1523.

connected with religion. This was regarded as a master-stroke of policy on the part of Zwingle, as it transferred ecclesiastical affairs from the control of the bishop to the representatives of the people.

“I shall now state,” says Zwingle, “for what reason we avail ourselves of the services of the Council of Two Hundred in Zurich, because some reproach us with letting that be done by two hundred which it is the business of the whole ecclesiastical community, consisting of about seven thousand souls, to do. The matter stands thus: We, the preachers of the Word of God in Zurich, on the one hand, give the Council of Two Hundred plainly to understand,

Council of Two Hundred.

that we commit to them the decision of that which properly belongs to the whole Church to decide, only on the condition that, in their consultations and conclusions, they hold themselves to the Word of God alone; and, on the other hand, that they only act so far in the name of the Church, as the Church *tacitly* and voluntarily adopts their conclusions and ordinances. We have also published this our opinion to the whole Church, and at the same time signified to them that, at the present time, when some are impelled, by the most foolish ideas, which they give out as inspirations of the Holy Spirit, it is not expedient to rest the decision of certain points in the whole people. Not as though we feared that God would not stand by and govern and direct His Church, but because at these *first beginnings of our ecclesiastical* polity, we must avoid all occasions of strife. Therefore we have advised the people that they commit the decision of external things and of rites to the Council of Two Hundred, under the condition that all be regulated according to the rule of God's Word, while we promise that, as soon as they, on any point, do not recognize the authority of the Word of God, we shall forthwith signify the same to them, and exclaim against their decision. With this arrangement the *Church is agreed, although she has not issued any public announcement upon the subject*; but she manifests her consent to it, by *gratefully and quietly submitting to it*, from which it is clear that she will take it ill if any one should be presumptuous enough to hinder the progress of the gospel by indulging in hair-splitting distinctions. She knows well, too, that we must keep Christ and our honour in view alone, if we are to acquit ourselves of our task with a regard to Christian unity. What, however, respects the changes to be proposed, the Council of Two Hundred will decide upon these."

Practically there was no guarantee in the Christian character of the members of the council that they would either read or act according to the Word of God. They were elected as a vestry or board of guardians might be in our own day by the votes of the rate-payers, and were charged to care for the doctrines preached in addition to the matters con-

No guarantee for the Christian character of the council.

nected with the relief of the poor, the construction of buildings, or the regulation of the police. Adopting the suggestions of Zwingle, so long as he retained his popularity and personal ascendancy, they might issue decrees in accordance with Scripture; but it was a perfect parody of things sacred to entrust such a body with the management of the affairs of a Christian Church, constituted of men believing the gospel and professing allegiance to Christ.

This great council resolved, on the 3rd of January, 1523, to accede to the proposal of Zwingle, and appointed a conference on matters of religion to be held on the 29th of January, the following circular was issued on the occasion :—

A conference appointed, 1523.

“We, burgomasters, Little and Great Councils, to all the clergy in our district, salutations, and the expression of our favourable dispositions. Disunion has manifested itself amongst us, and dissension exists among our preachers. Some preachers believe that they have faithfully preached the gospel; whereas others maintain that these promulgate error, mislead the people, and in fact, are heretics, although they are willing to maintain and defend, by proofs from Holy Scripture, the doctrine which they teach. Therefore, animated with the best intentions, and above all, to maintain the honour of God, peace, and Christian unity, we declare it to be our pleasure that ye, parsons, priests, and preachers, jointly and severally, or other priests, who are willing to speak, to reprove, or instruct the other part, do present yourselves at our Town-Hall at the early hour of business on the first day after the Emperor Charles’ day; and it is likewise our pleasure, if it do then and there come to a disputation, that this be carried on in the German tongue and language, and with proofs drawn from Holy Scripture. With all diligence, and with the assistance of some learned men, we shall give attention, in the event of its appearing good to us so to do; and according as the same shall be found to be agreeable to the Word of God and truth, to send each and all of you home with the order either to continue or to desist from his kind of preaching, that from

henceforth *each may not preach from the pulpit what seems good to himself* and without foundation. We shall also intimate the same to our gracious lord the Bishop of Constance, that his Grace, or his representatives, if they chose, may be present. But if any be contrarious, and bring not to his argument the true and genuine Word of God, we shall take such measures with him as we might rather avoid. Finally, we trust that God will illuminate our own souls with the light of his truth, that we may walk as the children of light."

The first religious conference in Zurich was held on the 29th of January, 1523. Six hundred persons assembled in the great hall of the council, and amongst them were present the representatives of the bishop. Zwingli sat alone in the centre of a vacant circle, at a table covered with Bibles in the Latin, Greek, and Hebrew languages, master of the debate and of the assembly. The council adopted the following resolution:—

Meeting of conference, 1523. "We, the burgomaster, the Little and Great Councils of the town of Zurich, to put an end to disturbance and dissension, after due deliberation, have resolved, and it is our opinion that Master Ulrich Zwingli continue, as hitherto, to preach Holy Scripture, according as the Spirit of God may enable him. We also command all other heretic priests, curates, and predicants in town and country to teach and preach from the pulpit nothing else but that which can be proved by the gospel and the recognized Holy Scriptures. Nor shall they for the future apply to each other abusive names, as heretic and the like."

Certain reforms were introduced in the institutions of the cathedral. Instead of the choral service in the morning, "heedlessly mumbled over by canons and chaplains," a service called the "prophesying" or exposition of Scripture was appointed (July 19th, 1525). At

Resolution adopted by the council.

Cathedral reforms, 1525.

eight o'clock, all the "town parsons, predicants, canons, and chaplains, and the more advanced scholars," assembled in the choir of the minster. After the repetition of a Latin prayer by Zwingle, the expository exercise commenced. A scholar read a passage from the Latin translation of the Bible, and the teacher commented upon it. The same passage was then read in the Hebrew text, then in the Greek Septuagint, and critically as well as doctrinally and practically explained in Latin. This exercise lasted about an hour. In the meantime the congregation had assembled to hear the sermon at nine. The section of Scripture which had been already critically considered, was then expounded in a manner adapted to the capacities of the congregation, the doctrines it contained brought home to the heart, and the whole proceeding closed with prayer. The scholars of the higher cathedral school then received instruction in the languages and the sciences from competent professors. Several of the nuns from the Cloisters petitioned the council to leave the institution, the rest were allowed to remain on the condition that they should lay aside the dress of their order, and dwell together in one house. "Let the monks," said Zwingle, "lay aside all their badges, their cowls, and their regulations, and let them put themselves on a level with the rest of Christendom, and unite themselves to it, if they would truly obey the Word of God."

Monasteries
regulated,
1524.

The council passed a resolution in December, 1524, to reform the monasteries in accordance with Zwingle's views, and proceeded to enforce it in the

most summary manner. Without previous announcement, a body of delegates from the chief guilds, accompanied by members of the council and citizens, and followed by the town militia, proceeded to the houses of the ministers of the gospel to take them prisoners; from thence they repaired to the Augustine monastery, assembled in this building the friars, and announced the resolution of the council, with the intimation that they were forthwith to follow them. The presence of the armed servants gave effect to the demand, and the monks surrendered without demur.

At a second religious disputation, held in October, 1523, upon images and the mass, symptoms of insubordination appeared. Some of the confederate cantons declined to attend. Second religious disputation, 1523. "We cannot believe," said the canton of Oberwalden, "that our Lord God has granted to Zwingli more grace than to the blessed saints and teachers who have suffered martyrdom for the faith. Nor do we hear that he leads a very spiritual life; on the contrary, we understand that he is more bent on fomenting discord than promoting peace and goodwill. If we had him here, and found the things said of him to be true, we should certainly give him that which would cause him to cease from such courses." Zwingli, nevertheless, retained the mastery. At the close of the disputation, Comthur Schmidt, turning to the burgomaster and council, said :—

"Since the ecclesiastical authority will not lend its aid to the grand object of bringing Christian doctrine before the people in an unadulterated form, and since it will not give a helping hand

to the truth, it *now rests on the civil power to do this*. For the sake of money, sirs, ye have often helped a worldly man to territory and men. For God's sake, *now help our Lord Christ again* to his sovereignty, that He alone may be worshipped, honoured, and invoked within the bounds of your territories, as our only Mediator, Redeemer, and Helper, in the time of need. Take up the matter in a bold and Christian spirit. 'Blessed,' said the president, 'be the words that thy mouth hath spoken.' The well-meaning burgo-masters did not profess to understand theological questions, but they had confidence in the teaching of Zwingle. The venerable Roist said: 'Ye, my lords of Zurich, ought to take up the Word of God boldly, in a manly spirit, and without any fear. God, the Almighty, will prosper you therein. I cannot speak of the matters that have come under review; *if I were to speak of them it would be as a blind man of colours*. However, what we have to do is plain—uprightly to take the Word of God as our guide. Pray, all of ye, that it will be well with us.'

Episcopal
power
transferred
to the state.

After issuing the mandate that the ministers should now preach the Word of God, it was found to be imperatively necessary to give them a little instruction, as it was ascertained, beyond a doubt, that they were most grossly ignorant. Zwingle prepared a manual for this purpose, entitled, "Christian Introduction." The council, in December, 1523, issued a decree to abolish the mass, and gave directions for the administration of the Lord's Supper. The other cantons sent a special embassy to the council of Zurich on the 21st of March, 1524, entreating them to abstain from the proposed innovations. The council replied: "We shall, dear confederates, faithfully observe the league with you; but in what concerns the Word of God, the salvation of our souls, and the peace of our consciences,

Decree to
abolish the
mass,
1523.

Resistance,
1524.

here we cannot yield an inch." In the prosecution of the work of reform by physical force, "on the 20th of June, twelve councillors, and three town parsons, with the town architect, smiths, locksmiths, joiners and masons, proceeded to the different churches, locked the doors from the inside, took down the crosses, removed the images, re-staining the walls."

Laws and regulations were then framed by Zwingle for maintaining Christian morality, and a

Board of moral discipline. A mandate was issued in 1530 to this effect:

"We order and ordain that every man, be he of noble birth, or a commoner, be he of high or low estate, man or woman, child or servant, shall attend the Church service, every Sunday, at least at the set time of public worship, except he be prevented by sickness, or other sufficient cause." Gambling, cursing, and all excess of eating and drinking, as well as in dress, were prohibited under penalties. The clergy were required to take the following oath:—

Oath of the clergy. "That I shall teach and preach the holy gospel, and the Word of God, to which I am called, as it is contained in the Old and

New Testaments, in truth, and with a full Christian understanding of the same, to the best of my ability,

according to the mandates issued by my lords, the councillors of Zurich, at the reformation of faith and doctrine, and shall mix no dogma or doctrine that is doubtful, and not yet introduced and approved by the regular assemblies of the Church. I shall likewise bear true loyalty and fidelity to my lords, the burgomaster and council, as to my superiors, and to the citizens; shall advance the best interests of the town and canton of Zurich, shall warn them of all that is injurious to their true interests, and avert, in so far as it lies in my power, and shall give all due

obedience, and heed to bailiffs and officers, to their commands and prohibitions in all things just and lawful: I shall keep the secrets of the council, and reveal nothing which may bring loss or cause reproof; all which, I swear truly and faithfully to observe."

Zwingle and his associates laboured earnestly, and with success, to extend the Reformation into other countries; but in this fatal mistake of enforcing religion by the power of the magistrate, he provoked, naturally, a powerful and violent reaction. His aim was to found a Christian state; but a state can only be made Christian as it is composed of Christian citizens, and such citizens can never be made by any Act of Parliament. A series of counter-resolutions were adopted at a Diet held in Lucerne on the 26th of January, 1524, and amongst them the following:

Counter-
resolutions,
1524.

"All the ancient and praiseworthy rites and customs of the Christian Church shall continue to be observed as formerly, by clergy and laymen." "None shall speak or dispute in the taverns, or over wine, upon the Lutheran or new doctrines." "Every one, whoever he be, man or woman, young or old, is called upon, in virtue of his oath, wherever he sees one or other of the articles infringed upon, to testify the same to our Lords, the governors, and their officers." Acts of violence followed.

Acts
violence.

Some of the adherents of Zwingle were imprisoned and put to death: excesses were committed by both parties leading to still greater animosity and outrage. We might hesitate to quote the words of low and profane abuse uttered by partisans in the conflict; but it is necessary to exhibit the vituperative spirit that was called forth. "The followers of

Zwingle," says Thomas Murner, the monk, are "impotent, unprincipled villains, thieves, lick-spittles, dastards and knaves, and that the heretics ought to be burned, and sent in smoke to the devil." In Lucerne, Henry Meuberg was put to death by a slow process of drowning for speaking against the nuns, and Nagel was burned alive for the dissemination of Zwinglian doctrines ;" at Schwytz, Eberhard Polt, of Lacken, and a priest from the same quarter, suffered death by fire for speaking against the ceremonies. The five cantons of Lucerne, Uri, Schwytz, Unterwalden, and Zug, in February, 1529, entered into a league with Austria :—

"We, King Ferdinand, and 'the five places,' so runs the treaty, with the lands, dominions, and territories of both parties to this league, remain steadfast to the ancient, true, Christian faith and sacraments: and if it be so that any one within our territories and dominions shall dare to attack the ancient, true, Christian faith, and venerated sacraments, or secretly or openly to preach against the same, and endeavour to turn the people therefrom, such an one shall be punished in property and person. Austria sends, in case of need, six thousand foot and four hundred horse, with the requisite artillery into Switzerland. To this end the reformed cantons may be blockaded, and provisions prevented from entering them, or seized.

In this state of things Zwingle was anxious to maintain union amongst the cantons that had received the Reformation. Any serious divergence of religious opinion was treated as a disaffection to the State and a disturbance of the public peace. Notwithstanding the excesses of fanatical parties connected with the German Anabaptists, there were some who were pacific in spirit, and who had a proper Christian aim.

League of
the five
cantons,
1529.

Unity
enforced.

Anabaptists.

“They came to us ministers of the Word in Zurich,” Zwingli says, “at first, indeed, in a friendly, but yet in so importunate a spirit, that one could bode mischief from their very mien and bearing. They thought it would be impossible for us to prevent that, even among those who boast themselves as belonging to the gospel many should not be found who would stand in the way of it. It could never be expected that all should live as Christians. ‘Now,’ say they, ‘*according to the Acts of the Apostles, the faithful separated themselves from the others, and formed a new church. The same thing must be done now.*’ They begged us to publish a declaration, that those who were disposed to follow Christ should join us, in which case they promised us that our host would far exceed that of the unbelievers. The community of the saints would then choose their council or senate from among themselves, as it was very apparent how many disbelieving and impious persons were to be found in the council and in the present mixed church. We returned them the following answer: ‘It is undoubtedly true that there ever will be people who, though confessing Christ, lead ungodly lives, and make a mock of virtue, nay, of godliness itself. If such, however, perseveringly give themselves out as Christians, and their practice is such as to permit of their being suffered by the church, they yet belong to our party, according to the principle which Christ Himself laid down at the planting of the gospel, a time which has so much resemblance to our own. ‘He who is not against us is with us.’ He has also commanded that we should let the

tares grow with the wheat till the harvest. Thereby we have the confident hope that of those who are disinclined to godliness, several will daily change and amend their lives. But even although this result should not take place, it is still possible for even the most pious to live among the godless. The example of the apostles is not applicable here, since they from whom they separated did not confess Christ. Nor would the greater part of these join in a separation from us, even were they more intimately bound to Christ than we ourselves. In the continual administration of the Word, we shall proclaim to all that which it is necessary for them to know, if they will not trifle with their own salvation; and we doubt not the number of believers will continue to increase steadily by the continual exhibition of the Word, and not by the tearing asunder of the body into many parts."

Many of the Anabaptists were greatly excited by fanatical leaders. The council ordered them to appear at the town-hall, to defend their doctrine against Zwingle in open disputation. They declined to do this on the ground that "they had already spoken enough with Zwingle upon their doctrine, and might not answer him any more, especially as in consequence of his long speeches they could never come to it." The disputation, however, was held on the 17th of January, 1525, and the council then published the following ordinance: "An error having arisen in respect of baptism, to the effect that infants should not be baptized until they arrive at years of dis-

Leaders
ordered to
appear
before the
council.

Disputa-
tion, 1525.
Ordinance
published.

cretion, and knowledge of the faith; and some having, in consequence thereof, left their children unbaptized, we have ordered a disputation upon this matter on the grounds of Holy Scripture; and have ordained that without regard to this error, children *must be baptized as soon as born*; and those who have left their children unbaptized, *must have this rite performed within the next eight days*. Whoever will not conform to this decree, shall, with wife and child, with purse and property, quit the town of our lords, their jurisdiction and territory, or take what farther may befall him." A number of the Anabaptists were enclosed in the Augustine cloister, that they might be convinced by Zwingli and his colleagues, who frequently visited them for that purpose, but without success. In these circumstances, some of the party desired a new public disputation with Zwingli, and in their petition to the Government to this effect, they gave the assurance that "whatever is there discovered to be in accordance with the Word of God—we shall stake our persons and lives, our honour and property upon. As, however, we have not received from God the gift, so to speak, with Zwingli, that he may thoroughly understand us, or we fully express ourselves, we beg you will permit certain who have been banished for this matter, to appear with a safe conduct at the conference, and thereafter to return to their present place of abode free from danger."

The discussion was held, and in the judgment of the council Zwingli had so far gained the victory that those who did not agree were denounced as persons of an "insolent, intemperate, and arrogant

mind ;" and in their decree, "Given on St. Andrew's Day, 1525," they say, "We authorize infants only to be baptized." Three of the Anabaptist leaders were thrown into prison, but found means to issue an address exhorting their brethren to resist the council. Tumult followed, and, to maintain their authority, the magistrates ordered two of the leaders to be put to death by drowning. Nothing was gained by the coercive system inaugurated by Zwingle. His project to form a Church-State for the country failed. The canton of Berne could not, for want of compatibility, unite with Zurich, and discordant elements were found in other friendly states. The Council of the Two Hundred degenerated in character. Disappointed in their course, Zwingle was bent on leaving Zurich, and expressed his determination to the council in the following terms:—

Decree on Baptism, 1525. Failure of Zwingle's scheme.

"For eleven years I have announced to you the gospel in all its purity, as became a faithful pastor. I have spared neither exhortations, nor reprimands, nor warnings. I have represented to you on many occasions how great a misfortune it would be to all Switzerland that you should again allow yourselves to be guided by those whose ambition is their God. *You have made no account of my remonstrances.* I see introduced into the council men destitute of morality and religion, who have nothing in view but their own interest ; who are enemies of evangelical doctrine, and zealous partisans of our adversaries. These are the men who are *now* listened to, and who have the sole direction of affairs. As long as you act in this manner, no good is to be hoped for : and, since it is to me that all our misfortunes are attributed, though none of my counsels are followed, I demand my dismissal, and will go and seek an asylum elsewhere."*

* Hess, p. 306.

The ecclesiastical organization framed with so much care and labour by Zwingli utterly failed in its object. Trained under his system, the Helvetian has been ingrained in intolerance. Men who have denied the faith as held by the Reformers, and who regard it as a kind of clerical accomplishment to question the Divine authenticity of the Scriptures, down to our own times have had dominion over the faith of others, and have punished with the utmost rigour of the law those who professed their regard for the truth of the gospel, and who sought a simpler and purer form of worship. Zwingli saw the country plunged into the miseries of civil war, and finally he perished himself on the field of battle.

“How totally,” says Ranke, “were the daring schemes which Zwingli had cherished overthrown!” “The war lasted only six weeks, but it totally changed the prospects of Switzerland. ‘Bullinger’s Chronicle’ contains at the end a short comparison of what the Reformers had projected, and what they had actually accomplished. They had desired the uniform introduction of the evangelical faith; the depression of the oligarchies; the abatement of the Five Cantons. The result was, that the new doctrine was extirpated from many places where it had been preached; that the Papacy was reinstated in its authority; that the Five Cantons gained such an ascendancy as they had never enjoyed before; and that the oligarchies had more power than ever.”* “Honour is overthrown; arbitrary power is established,” says Bullinger; “the counsels of the Lord are marvellous.”

* Ranke, iii. 408, 416; Bullinger, iii. 353.

The disastrous scheme of State Churchism framed by Zwingle is the more deeply to be regretted in consideration of the remarkable clearness of his views on other questions. His political associations have almost eclipsed the light to be found in his theological writings. If he had stood aloof from political and military affairs, none of his contemporaries would have exerted a more powerful or more lasting influence. How clear, for example, are his views as to the right interpretation of Scripture:—

“The Word of God,” he says, “is full of significance, and rich in reference and allusion; and although it has but one, and this the simplest and the truest sense, yet it happens that, owing to the obtuseness and limited range of the human faculties, the genuine and proper sense of the Holy Ghost, who it is that speaks in Scripture, is comprehended but rarely and with difficulty, except by those whom the Spirit has conducted into his innermost sanctuary. It is thus that so many various explanations and senses are produced by the interpreters of Scripture—each striving to explain it to the profit of the Church, according to the gift given him of God. Nor are they to be so severely reprehended for their mistakes, when, as often occurs, they miss the mark in their commentaries, in so far as they keep solely in view that which is, in all the books of Scripture, the grand and main object—the *glory of God and the salvation of man*. For Holy Scripture is an unmeasurable and, in its whole extent, un navigable sea, the depth of which has been sounded by none; it is a field, the cultivation of which will afford exercise to the intellectual labours of man during centuries. The Word of God is infallible, perfect truth. There is nothing therein unconsidered, disconnected, or self-contradictory. Where, however, we do not understand the sense and the connection, there the fault lies, not in the Word of God, but in the darkness and bluntness of our understanding. When these statements occur, which, at the first blush, appear to stand in contradiction to other statements,

Zwingle's
views on
the inter-
pretation of
Scripture.

the different passages ought to be held opposite to each other : nor ought we to hold obstinately to a single one without any regard to the others, but view the whole in the light of all." "Almost every error comes from the *literalists*, who treat the letter in a manner contrary to the true sense. The letter is for the sake of the sense, and is designed to serve it—not the sense, the letter : and the letter must be explained according to the spirit and the true sense, else the former were nothing but a deception and a delusion ; for there is not a word—the very plainest and simplest word that can be spoken on earth—which, if one is bent upon chicanery and deception, may not be wrested from its true sense and falsified. Therefore, it is not only with Holy Scripture, but with every law, with every precept, order, or edict that is issued, with every speech or use of language whatever, a standing rule that the purport and sense show the contents and significance of the words, and not that the dark and as yet, comparatively speaking, unintelligible *word* be allowed to overmaster, to confuse, and mystify the sense. This may be shown by innumerable examples from Holy Scripture, as well as from profane books. I shall illustrate it by a single one. Christ commands : 'If thy foot offend thee, cut it off.' If we were to estimate the sense of these words according to the *literal standard*, it would be requisite to take from man not only one foot, but every foot he had, even although he had as many as the centipedes or the sea-urchins.

"But if we keep to the true sense and purpose of Christ, according to which He means to say, that we are to cut off from the body—which is the Church—the infectious part that, like a cancer, would eat into the whole if not removed, it is evident that not the foot upon which a man goes and stands is to be cut away, but the corrupt brother in the faith, even although he might be as serviceable as one foot is to the other. The clear sense must determine the less clear sense, not the words the sense. The words of Christ are spirit, not letter, therefore one ought not in a stubborn and violent spirit to hang on the letter alone, but to take the letter according to the spirit. But still the letter must not be despised. If you say the letter kills, of what use is it then ? I reply, this is a mode of speech : for, properly speaking, it is not the letter which kills, but he kills himself, is himself the cause of his death, who rests upon the

letter alone, and pierces not to the sense and the spirit. The ropes draw not without the horse, nor the horse without the ropes, but both when they are united. The ropes, however, keep the horse in the straight line. If there were no letter in Scripture, each would speak according to his own spirit. The written word is therefore the rule and the cord by which all is to be directed. The spirit of truth, *i. e.*, the spirit of the believer, illuminated by the spirit of God, comprehends the letter and rules it. The spirit wrests not the letter or the sense, but it clears it up and makes it plain. It is not only carnal, it is something worse, so foolishly to hold to the unintelligible letter that one will not listen to the clearer word. We will that one reject not the letter but esteem it very highly, but only for the right understanding of the sense, else the letter is worse than useless, for it becomes positively hurtful."

Zwingle applied these principles of interpretation in the question of the Lord's Supper.

"In the holy Supper of the Eucharist," he says, "we commemorate the propitiation made, when Christ, the God-man, was offered up in sacrifice in his human nature, and we thank God for this great benefit, acknowledging our obligation to lead a Christian life with love to the brethren. While in this solemn transaction we praise God for his gracious gifts of goodness and mercy, these are not communicated to us except symbolically—the symbols and the word preached simply announcing them to us. It is the Holy Spirit alone which draws the mind to its own source of light and joy, by which the souls that have pined in despair on account of their sins are again quickened and renewed in youth. If the *mere transaction* could do anything of this sort, then were Judas come to himself again, and had not left the society of the other disciples to go away and betray his Master. Nay, the executioners themselves who nailed Christ to the cross, or blasphemed Him at the cross had changed their disposition, and had not abandoned themselves to their course of wickedness, if the outward things had brought faith or pardon of sins, for they saw that sacrificial object by which the sins of the world are expiated, not symbolically expressed, but transacted before their eyes. No such result however, followed. For only those repented whom the Spirit

inwardly illumined to recognize Christ as their Saviour, and whom the Father drew, that they might come to Him and joyfully receive Him. Outward things can only represent and signify. Yet Christ condescends to call the bread his body, which to speak with Augustine, is but the sign of his body; and men enlightened by the Spirit of God, follow their Master, attributing to the holy eucharist all that for which we give thanks in this solemn act of praise. They call it *the Lord's body* because we therein commemorate that Christ became man and died for us. They call it the *nourishment of souls*, because in it He is set forth who alone is the undoubted pledge of our hope, not as though the natural bread were the natural body of Christ, or as if the same, eaten and digested, took away sin, or as if the natural bread and body of Christ could nourish the soul, but because the divine goodness has acted towards us in so gracious and familiar a manner as to present certain images and forms of inward spiritual things to our outward senses, which signs it dignifies with the same names as the things themselves, which they signify, because they are the symbolical signs and intimations of the more substantial realities. But it is highly objectionable in us to be so foolish and perverse as to attribute to a symbol that which belongs to God, and at once to transform the Creator into the creature, and the creature into the Creator. Christ has not instituted the sacraments that we may seek or place our righteousness in them, but that we may be reminded and stirred up by them to arrive at true righteousness of heart and faith; for the external signs do not make us righteous, but they point us to justification by faith, and they awaken us to holiness of life."

The influence of Zwingle extended to Basle. We must now direct our attention to the course of the Reformation in that city. The writings of Luther began to be printed there in 1519. His translation of the New Testament was issued also in Basle after it had appeared in Wittenberg. At the same time Froben published the "Common Places" of Melancthon, and the works of John Wessel. Capiton preached sermons on the

Reforma-
tion at
Basle, 1519.

gospel of Matthew, and the epistle to the Romans, which awakened general attention. The Franciscan monks raised a cry of heresy, but the "Word of God grew mightily and prevailed."

JOHN **ÆCOLAMPADIUS** became the principal leader of the movement. He was drawn very gradually to the knowledge and confession of evangelical truth. Impressed in the early part of his career as a priest with the sentiment of St. Bernard, that the knowledge of Jesus Christ and Him crucified, is the best philosophy, he tried to make everything in the service of the Romish Church symbolic of the Saviour. He was invited by the bishop of Basle to become a preacher in the cathedral, and accepted the appointment with eagerness, delighted to become associated with Erasmus, whom he assisted in the first edition of his remarks on the New Testament. Disappointed and perplexed in his work however, **Æcolampadius**, on the 23rd of April, 1520, secluded himself in a monastery of the order of St. Bridget, at Altenmunster, in the hope that he should attain to greater sanctity and come to a clearer knowledge of the truth.

Enters a
monastery,
1520.

The friends of **Æcolampadius** followed him to the place of his retreat to ask his opinion respecting the writings of Luther condemned by the Pope. He had the courage to publish a reply, in which he said: "There is more of evangelical truth in them than in his adversaries. If they reject Luther they must at the same time condemn the Scripture which he explains so admirably."

Æcolampadius exposed himself in consequence to the hostility of the monks, and after a residence

there of two years, he left the convent in 1522, and for some time found shelter and protection in the castle of Ebernbourg as chaplain to the Chevalier Francis of Sickengen. He had not formally renounced in the convent the views held by the monastic fraternity, though he avowed his attachment to evangelical doctrine, but at Ebernbourg he could breathe more freely, and the letters he wrote to his friends indicated steady and cautious progress in religious knowledge. He began to fix his confidence on Christ alone, as the only foundation. "Jesus Christ," he said, "is our liberty, if we confess Him and set Him before us—forgetting ourselves—all will go well."

Leaves the
convent,
1522.

"We ought not to seek to please men, for then we shall be no more the servants of Christ." We should take care not to lose Christ in seeking outward peace or comfort. Many are scrupulously anxious to obey the commandments of men who have no such concern to keep the commandments of God. *See, for example, in the observance of the Holy Supper as instituted by our Lord and how it has been distorted and complicated by men.* In divine things there should be no limit to our right. When, therefore, it is as useful both for the good of our neighbour and for the glory of God, that we should change usages long established, I see nothing that should prevent us. For the same reason it is not necessary in all things to have the sanction of a bishop.

Condemns
External-
ism.

"I do not know that we ought to give even the name of bishop to these personages, who have nothing more of the bishop than the crosier and the

holy chrism. They are whited sepulchres, trees without fruit, clouds driven by the whirlwind. We shall scarcely find them in the rear-guard of the army, and they claim to be its chiefs. When they present themselves they should prove that they possess at least one of the graces of the Holy Spirit. We see only tinkling bells, chasubles, censers, wax tapers, and things quite foreign to us. The Church has no need of all this pomp. We should not be taken up with it, but seek other models." With prudent care Œcolampadius introduced changes into the Romish service, having at the time no thought of separation, until he found himself impelled by the force of truth into a position in which he was estranged from the entire system.

From Ebernbourg, Œcolampadius removed again to Basle, and for the last nine years of his life, in concert with Zwingle, influenced chiefly the course of the Swiss Reformation.

Writing to Zwingle, November 4th, 1525, he says : "*I have began to administer the Lord's Supper under a form a little more simple.*"

Letter to
Zwingle on
the Lord's
Supper.

The Liturgy of the Supper commences with an invitation to each to examine himself, whether he has a living faith in Christ.

After that invitation the Apostles' Creed is repeated. Then we pronounce excommunication on scandalous offenders, followed by prayer for all conditions of men. The Confession of Sins, the reading of Ps. cxxx., and Absolution. We then read some portions of Holy Scripture which relate to the sufferings of our Lord, Isa. liii. 1—7; 1 Cor. xi. 23, 26; 2 Cor. v. 14, 21; Phil. ii. 5, 11; Ps. xx. 11; Matt. xxvii.

35—50. This reading is followed by an exhortation. In distributing the bread the minister says: "May your steadfast faith in Christ conduct you to life eternal;" in giving the cup he says: "May your faith in the blood of Jesus Christ lead you to eternal life."

These changes were effected amidst popular tumult, suppressed in a manner scarcely less violent by the Council of Basle. Controversy arose. Ecolampadius contended in opposition to Luther, that the sacraments were instituted for our instruction, to revive our faith, and to aid us to rise from things seen to the unseen, and that they were not to be adored as mysteries. He was of opinion that when our Lord said "My body," He meant the figure of my body. Ecolampadius showed that this figurative mode of expression was often used by Jesus, as when He said: "I am the Bread of Life," "I am the vine," "I am the door."

"We have," he said, "a sure rule by which to determine that which ought to be understood in a figurative sense. We must always interpret Scripture in a manner that is consistent with itself, and we must compare one Scripture with another, in order to avoid contradictions."

"It is with great regret," he wrote to Luther, "that I take up the pen against you, for I recognize in you a valiant and useful servant of the gospel, by the means of which God has opened the eyes of many to bring them to the truth; but now we are made to understand that you are also liable to fail and stumble like all other men. This, my dear Martin, to my own mind, is an admonition from God—a merciful dispensation to show us that our faculties are very limited and poor, and soon fail us when God withdraws his hand."

Letter to
Luther.

None should trust in the doctrines of men, for they are liable to err. It is to the Master in heaven that we must look—it is the truth that we must regard with a spirit docile and eager for instruction. This is the true way to unity and peace. So far as you are concerned, I have yet good hope that you will conduct yourself for the future in this affair with more charity and prudence. You should remember that in the Church of Jesus Christ there are other men who have a right to speak, and that being simply a workman with ourselves, you ought to be ashamed to act the part of a tyrant. It is the Lord only who has the right of dominion. You ought not to imagine, my dear brother, that the Holy Spirit is limited to Jerusalem, to Rome, to Wittenberg, to Basle, or that He is tied to your person, or any other. In Jesus Christ alone may be found the fulness of grace and truth. If some of your partisans who scream like eagles, would only hear us in a friendly spirit, things perhaps would go much better. But they continue to treat us as they have themselves been served by the papists, inciting others to prohibit the reading of our books, to persecute us, to insult us, as if they had never seen greater heretics in Christendom. May God bring them to learn from our experience, though they call us false prophets and revolutionists, they have not yet proved us to be such."

In the controversy on this subject *Æcolampadius* was intimately associated with the Reformer at Zurich. Zwingli was as reluctant as his

Association
of *Æcolam-
padius* and
Zwingli.

friend to assume an attitude of hostility to Luther. For a long time Zwingli had given thoughtful attention to the subject.

Whilst at Glarus, he read the work of Ratram, on the Body and Blood of the Lord, written in the ninth century, against the doctrine of transubstan-

Attention
given by
Zwingli to
the question
of the Lord's
Supper.

tiation, and under the influence of the views of Zwingli, the service of the mass was suspended by Geroldseck at Einsiedeln.

But it was from the careful study of the New Testament that Zwingli came to the conclusion that the Lord's Supper was simply

a commemorative ordinance. Whilst considering the words of the institution in connection with various passages of Scripture, in reference to the "eating" of the "bread" and of the "flesh," in the summer of 1522, two learned men from Holland, John Rhodius and George Sagan, with a treatise in the form of a letter, from Cornelius Honius, or Hoen, upon the words of the institution in which the word "is" ("this *is* my body") is rendered by "signifies," Zwingle accepted this view. "For a greater number of years," he writes, "than it is necessary for me here to state, I have held the opinion which I expressed in a letter to Albert, 16th November, 1524, and in the commentary, March, 1525. My intention, however, was not to publish it to the world without due consideration." "I testify before God," he says on another occasion, "that with his glory alone in view, I have, for several years, conversed in private upon this subject with many men of learning, because I was unwilling to spread anything abroad amongst the people inconsiderately, which might excite discussion; but the more I consulted, the more I found to concur with me in opinion. Often, too, have I besought the Lord that He would point me out the way in which this most important matter of all, in the judgment of the simple-minded, might be represented in a manner intelligible to all, that for the future this sacred solemnity of the Church 'might tend to edification and salvation.'"

The question, privately considered by Zwingle, was forced into public notice by a tract issued from

the press by Carlstadt, at Jena, in 1524, entitled, "Whether it can be proved, by Holy Scripture, that Christ is present in the sacrament, with body, blood, and soul," and expressed the opinion that Christ, at the institution of the supper, referred in the words, "*Take, eat,*" to the *bread*, on the other hand to *Himself* in the words, "*This is my body,*" and drew the conclusion from hence—that neither bread nor wine are changed into the body and blood of Christ, as the Papists teach, nor that the body and blood of Christ unite with the wine, according to the opinion of Luther, but that the bread and wine are only symbols of Christ's broken body and shed blood, and that the ordinance of the supper is a *solemn commemoration of the body of Christ given us*. Luther was fired with indignation, that Carlstadt, being a professor at Wittenberg, should be suffered to print his writings at all. "Carlstadt," he says, 7th January, 1524, "has set up a printing-press at Jena; but the elector and our academy have promised, conformably with the Imperial edict, to permit no publication to be sent forth which has not previously undergone the examination of the commissioners. It is not to be endured, that Carlstadt and his people should be alone permitted to emancipate themselves from due submission to the authorities." Carlstadt, stung by the reproaches of Luther, became intemperate in his writings, and offered open resistance to the ecclesiastical measures of the Saxon Reformer. In the heat of the contest, for greater personal safety, he retired to Basle. "I yesterday," Luther writes, 14th December, 1524, "received a communi-

Carlstadt
at Jena,
1524.

Displeasure
of Luther.

cation from one of my friends at Strasburg in reference to this man. After passing through that city, it seems he went on to Basle, and has since vomited forth five books, which are to be followed by two others to the same tune. In every one of them I am denounced as a double Papist, as the ally of Antichrist and what not." In another letter, dated 13th June, 1525, Luther says: "My friends write me from Basle, that Carlstadt's people there have been put in prison, and that his books had a very narrow escape from being publicly burned. He is still there, it seems, but in concealment. Ecolampadius and Pellican, are writing in support of his opinions."

Neither Ecolampadius nor Zwingle had the slightest sympathy with Carlstadt in the extravagance of his views on other subjects; but it was a mortal offence to Luther that they should coincide with him in opinion on the subject of the Lord's Supper:—

"Carlstadt comes forward," Zwingle says, "with his declaration, a too strained one, as even his most ardent followers admit, after they had weighed the sentiments of the ancients upon the subject, which I produced to them. I have also learned that Carlstadt had resolved to come to Zurich for the purpose alone of talking over this subject with me, upon which he is grossly ignorant. Some, however, in their dark fanatical spirit, have so strongly dissuaded him from a meeting with me, that he has not even saluted me when he saw me. Nay, the medicine they have given him has operated in this respect so powerfully, that he neither at Basle nor at Strasburg, spoke a syllable with the ministers of the Word upon that subject. Those also, to whom I have just referred, as being filled with a dark, fanatical spirit, were well acquainted with my views of the Supper, although they could by no means be brought to accede to them. No sooner, however, had they heard of Carl-

1524.

1525.

Zwingle's
opinion of
Carlstadt.

stadt's declaration of opinion, than they hasted to Basle themselves, brought his books on their backs hither, and filled not only cities, towns, and villages with them, but even the hamlets. The result, however, by no means corresponded with their expectation, for very few adopted the opinion, as I think, deterred by the harshness and violence of the interpretation. What should I now do who have to preach the Word of God in Zurich? Although a great part of the brethren were agreed, in regard to the main point (for each had for himself learned through faith and my preaching, how unreasonable it is to look for flesh and blood in that which Christ, speaking of his body and blood, has declared to be spirit and life), yet they withheld their consent from so rash an interpretation. I say, what was I to do, who saw Carlstadt thus running eagerly to the goal, but missing it? Was I to repel the people back once more to their former error against my own convictions? I did this: I began to explain the figurative meaning (*trope*) which lies in the words of our Lord, and I did it with so much success, that the brethren comprehended all I had to say, ere I was half through with the explanation I had to make. When could I have more seasonably come forward with my opinion than just when the subject had been broached in so dangerous a manner? Nay, would it have been at all wise to have kept silence?"

Writing at a later period in reference to the manner in which Luther and Carlstadt contended with each other, Zwingle says:—

"Your everlasting complaints, that nobody has replied to what you have written against Carlstadt, have led me to a perusal of your polemical writings. But, gracious heavens, how little that is solid and well considered does one find in them? I have only seen, in the whole affair, two blind fighters rushing into single combat. Carlstadt, indeed, is on the track of truth, but ignorant of the true significance of the figures, he transposes and perverts the words senselessly, like some raw recruit, who has, indeed, courage and arms but without skill, not knowing on which parts of the body he must fasten his arms. Thus, instead of the harness, he binds the helmet on his breast, the greaves he puts on

Criticism
of Luther's
style.

his forehead, and with the armlets he covers his legs, out of the coat of mail he makes a helmet, and out of the helmet a quiver, out of the javelin a bow, and out of the bow an arrow. So Carlstadt went into battle. But you, too, though trained to war, rush into the arena without consideration and without arms, and make him who is inexperienced in the use of his arms so ridiculous to all, by heaping upon him every possible gibe, jeer, and sally of wit, that no eye could recognize him again in the form in which you paint him. Nay, by your noisy exaggerations and invectives, you have put the spectators into the dilemma of not knowing whether to laugh at or to pity the poor man."

Luther sent out a volley of words against Ecolampadius and Zwingle, terrible as "hailstones and coals of fire;" but they had little or no effect on the Zurich reformer. Luther said the doctrine taught by the Sacramentaries was a "suggestion of the devil."

"You write, dear Luther," replied Zwingle, "that the devil has taken possession of us; we had indeed read that Christ hath died for us, but we receive it not into our hearts. We do not know what better to say to this than to reply in the words of Paul: 'Who art thou that judgest another man's servant?' (Rom. xiv. 4.) If we repeat to you the sum of what we believe and teach, you either say we have learned it from you; and is it not wonderful that if we have learned it from you, you do not recognize your own doctrine? or you say we do not believe our own confession. What are we to do? We can do nothing but joyfully bear the reproach, and lay our case before the just judge? There were many, ere your ill temper laid itself, who, in the heat of the debate, treated of this important subject, upright and conscientious men they were, whom you spared not in a manner consistent either with your own or their dignity. I now appeal from Luther in a passion to Luther appeased and pacified, for it cannot escape you how dangerous it is to take counsel of anger, self-conceit, obstinacy, and ill humour and other passions; with what boldness and insolence they pass themselves off as justice, courage, firmness, and dignity. Give up, I pray you, your scold-

ing, which is disreputable, and cease to overwhelm us only with hard words. Not as though I cared for such blasts; I have, thank God, pretty well accustomed myself to them, and stand upon a rock which does not reel, and which gives me a sure footing against the storm; but I greatly prefer to see truth coming forward in its own might and strength than to see a man making himself unamiable by the use of unmeasured language, which always gives cause to suspect there is pride at the bottom. Let us reflect also that God is a spectator of this contest. He who knows better than we ourselves the spirit in which we act. Let us also consider that not only the whole of Germany, but the whole of Christendom, not only the present but future centuries to the end of time, are our judges, and that they will form a juster judgment of this matter because they will be less infected by passion."

In another treatise Zwingli reminds Luther of the reunion of Paul and Barnabas after their dissension (Acts xviii.), and adds, "We then humbly pray Luther, by the same spirit in which we all live, in which he has preached the gospel, as we also believe it, by the same spirit in which, at the last day, we shall have wished to preach it, to reflect that he is not exalted above error, since Paul himself, in the heat of temper, went too far, who yet, in respect of doctrine and holiness is equal to, or even surpasses all the apostles. We know Luther's courageous advance against the Papacy, when none ventured it; we know at the same time, however, which, with God's grace, he will also admit, that his knowledge and learning are but of moderate dimensions; let him therefore beware lest the devil tempt him to pride. God has given him strength of soul enough, let him turn it to his glory, and sure we are that we shall be in all respects one with him. May the God of truth grant this. Amen."

This impressive and dignified rebuke Luther unhappily met with scurrility too coarse to repeat. "The fanatics," he says, "murder Christ my Lord, and God the Father in his Word, my mother Christianity, along with my brethren, and they would slay myself, and they say I ought to be at peace with them; we ought to be at peace with them, we ought to cultivate love towards each other!" "Listen to this, you low dog or fanatic, you who are but an unreasoning ass."

The Strasburg reformers, Capito, Bucer, and Hedio, were anxious to bring about an understanding between Luther and Zwingli, but the "furious Orestes" would not yield. At Mediation of friends. the instance of John Haner, the landgrave of Hesse was induced to undertake the task of mediation. The landgrave wrote from Spiers, 9th May, 1529, to invite Zwingli to a disputation at Marburg, in the following terms: Invitation of the landgrave of Hesse. 1529. "We are at present busily engaged in bringing together to a suitable place of meeting, Luther, Melancthon, and others, who are nearly of your opinion upon the sacrament, to see if the Almighty and Merciful God would grant us grace to compare the said article of belief with the standard of Holy Scripture, and enable us to live in a harmonious and unanimous understanding upon the point; for at this diet the Papists knew not better to defend their perversions, abuses, and corruptions than by saying that we who pretend to cling to the pure Word of God are not united in doctrine and faith among ourselves; and verily if we were united then knavery would soon come to an end. Where-

fore our most gracious request to you is, that you would use your best endeavours to put the matter upon a right foundation, and bring us all to one Christian and unanimous sentiment." Zwingle would have preferred Strasburg as a more convenient place for the conference, but he

Zwingle's reply. says: "If Marburg is to be the place of meeting, I shall pray the Lord that He may conduct me safely thither to the praise of his glory. And I shall, indeed, repair thither, even although my lords of the council shall not be quite agreed about it, if only it be not against the will of God and the weal of the Church, for I entertain the hope that the ray of truth, when we come together, will enlighten our eyes, so that we shall give the honour to truth, and let her reign."

Luther, in reply to the landgrave, wrote, June 23rd, 1529, "Grace and peace in Jesus Christ. Most serene lord, I have received the letter wherein

Luther's reply. your Highness seeks to induce me to proceed to Marburg, for the purpose of conferring with Œcolampadius and his friends on the subject of our differences of opinion on the Holy Sacrament. I cannot conceal from your Highness that I have very slight hopes of peace and union resulting from such a conference. Nevertheless, your Highness is entitled to our thanks for the anxiety you manifest in this matter, and I, for my part, am quite ready to proceed to the place indicated, though I regard it as a wholly useless step. I would not leave to our adversaries the glory of having it to say that they were more desirous of peace and concord than we are. But I would

humbly entreat you, gracious lord and prince, ere we meet together, to inform yourself whether they are disposed to make some concessions to us: for if they are not, I fear that our conference will do more harm than good, and that the result will consequently be just the reverse of that which your Highness so sincerely and so laudably contemplates. It can serve no purpose of good for the two parties to meet and discuss, if each meets the other fully pre-determined to yield not a jot of the points in dispute."

At length the necessary arrangements were made. The Council of Zurich refused to give permission to Zwingli to go, but he left in the night, and wrote an explanation, in which he says: "The Lords of the Common

*Zwingli's
letter to the
council.*

Council not having expressly refused me leave of absence, but having resolved to bring the matter before you on the ensuing week, I feared, on the one hand, that your lordships might not concede my request; while, on the other hand, something has, in the meantime, transpired to precipitate affairs, so that I am unwilling to wait till next week. While realizing the present state of military affairs—the dangers, the scarcity, which might induce me to remain here, I have also considered the grace of the ever-faithful God, who has never abandoned us, and who will over-rule all for the well-being of his own people, and for his own glory. I have, therefore, in haste, taken the road, because I foresaw, from your faithful regard for me, and the care you take of me, you would not have given me leave of absence." "It appeared to me," he adds, "not proper that I should be absent, because a full

deliberation would have been thereby rendered impossible, and the journey of many excellent men of the opposite party have been made in vain. And they might have interpreted my non-appearance to a desire to shun so friendly a conference. On which account I most humbly beseech your lordships not to interpret my hasty departure to any slighting of your authority, contempt of which I cannot bear to see in others ; but to reflect that my absence from the conference might prejudice the truth and your good name. Finally, my lords, have good hope towards God, that if He permit us to reach the end of our journey, He will grant to us his help to defend resolutely his truth, and not to disgrace his Church." Zwingle requests that, as the people of Basle had resolved to send with Ecolampadius a deputy of the council, a councillor might go from Zurich ; "the chief men of my most gracious lords being so bowed down with age and bodily infirmity as to make a long journey too onerous for them ; for we shall have to ride through dark, pathless woods, through bush and brake—to which hardships not every one may be exposed."

The council deputed one of their number to accompany Zwingle, and provided an escort for their protection. In six days they reached Basle in safety, and embarked there, with Ecolampadius and a company of merchants, for Strasburg, where they arrived September 6th, 1529, and found the kindest reception at the house of Matthias Zell. Catharine, the wife of the pastor—a real heroine in the cause of truth and freedom—showed them the most assiduous attention.

Zwingle
and Ecolampadius
at Strasburg.

"I was fourteen days," she says in one of her letters, "waiting-maid and cook when the dear men, Zwingle and Ecolampadius, were on their journey to Marburg, where they journeyed along with many of our folks to meet Dr. Luther." During their stay, Zwingle preached in the minster, to the great delight of the people of Strasburg.

On the 22nd of September, they proceeded on their journey to Marburg, accompanied by the pastors Bucer and Hedio, and by the town sheriff of Strasburg, escorted by forty Journey to Marburg. Hessian cavaliers. Their way was over mountains and through valleys; but, by taking secret and safe paths, they reached Marburg on the 29th of September without molestation or injury.

On the following day Luther and Melancthon arrived, and both parties were invited to the castle, and were entertained in a princely manner. Luther was not in the best mood for free and fair discussion. It required all the skill and address of the landgrave to prevent unpleasant collision. He arranged that there should be preliminary conferences in private between the combatants, separated for the occasion in pairs. Luther was assigned to Ecolampadius; Zwingle was closeted with Melancthon. They began the colloquy early in the morning, and continued until the hour for dinner. In the afternoon the discussion was conducted in writing, as a preparation for the general conference.

On Saturday morning, the 2nd of October, the princes, nobles, deputies, and theologians Conference. met beneath the Gothic arches of the Knights' Hall, overlooking the river Lahn. The

landgrave presided in citizen's dress, accompanied by his court. Before him, at a table, Luther, Melancthon, Zwingle, and Œcolampadius took their places, with their followers behind them. Luther, as he approached the table, took a piece of chalk and slowly wrote upon the velvet cloth, "*Hoc est corpus meum*;" and insisted, against all criticism, argument or explanation, that the words should be taken absolutely in their literal sense; and demanded instant and unqualified submission on the part of the Swiss reformers.

The discussion was resumed on the following day, with no better success. Seizing the velvet cloth, and, tearing it from the table, Luther held it up in the face of Zwingle and Œcolampadius, and said, "See! see! this is your text. You have not yet driven us from it, as you have boasted; and we care for no other proofs."

"If this be the case," replied Œcolampadius, "we had better leave off the discussion. But I will first declare that, if we quote the Fathers, it is only to free our doctrine from the reproach of novelty, and not to support our cause by their novelty."

The landgrave was extremely anxious that the opposing parties should not separate without some token of mutual reconciliation. Luther says, "They supplicated us to bestow upon them the title of 'brothers.' Zwingle even implored the landgrave with tears to do this. 'There is no place on earth,' he said, 'where I so much covet to pass my days as at Wittenberg.' "We did not, however, accord to them this appellation of "brothers." All we granted them was, that which charity enjoins us to bestow,

even upon our enemies. They, however, behaved in all respects with an incredible degree of humility and amiability.' "

Ultimately a statement of doctrine was proposed in which all consented to unite. All shook hands. "There is now," said Luther, "concord between us; and, if we persevere in prayer, brotherhood will come."

After this satisfactory termination of the conference, the spirit of Luther seems to have been disenchanted of the angry spell which caused such anxiety and apprehension to his friends; and, on the 4th of October, he penned the following familiar note to his wife reporting the result :—

"Grace to you and peace in Christ, Herr Kate; know that our friendly conference at Marburg has come to an end, and we are on almost all points united, except that our opponents maintain that it is mere bread in the Lord's Supper, but acknowledging the presence of Christ therein spiritually. Now the landgrave is trying to bring us to unanimity; or, in case we continue to disagree, to bind us together as brothers and members of Christ. To this effect he is working eagerly; but we care naught for 'brothers' and ministers. All we wish is peace and good will. I think that to-morrow we shall break up, and go to an honourable gentleman at Schl, in Vorgtland, whither his electoral grace has called us.

Luther's
letters to
his wife.

"Tell Herr Pommer that the best arguments were those of Zwingli, that '*Corpus non potest esse sine loco: ergo, Christi corpus non est in pane.*' And those of Ecclampadius, the '*Sacramentum est*

signum corporis Christi.' I thought that God had blinded them so that they would advance nothing. I have much to do, and the messenger is in a hurry. Say 'Good-night' to all, and pray for us. We are all fresh and sound, and live like princes. Kiss Lensgen and Hängsen for me.

"Every one here has become mad with fear of the 'sweating sickness.' Yesterday fifty were taken ill of it, of whom one or two have died."

The Swiss Reformers left the conference with some misgivings. Zwingli reached Zurich on the 19th of October. "The truth," he said to his friends, "has prevailed so manifestly, that if any one has been defeated before all the world, it is Luther, although he constantly exclaimed that he was invincible." Writing to the landgrave, he said, "Lutheranism will lie as heavy upon us as Popery."

Circumstances compelled the continental reformers to unite in self-defence. After the ratification of peace between the emperor and the Pope, measures were adopted by both to suppress the Reformation. Luther was personally in so much jeopardy from the Edict of Worms, that he could not venture on the scene. Melancthon, for the occasion, appeared as a kind of theological plenipotentiary: pliant, ingenious, and unsuspecting, he was prepared to listen eagerly to any proposals of peace. The crisis was serious. An announcement was made that the resolution of Spires, which left all the States free to act in conformity with the dictates of their consciences, was annulled by the emperor in virtue of his

Reformers
combine
for self-
defence.

supreme power. On the 19th of April, 1529, the reforming princes met again at Spire, to ^{Protest of} utter their public and solemn protest. ^{Spire, 1529.} With respect to the former Edict of Spire, they said :—

“We cannot consent to its repeal. Firstly, because we believe that his imperial majesty (as well as you and we) is called to maintain firmly what has been unanimously and solemnly resolved.

“Secondly, because it concerns the glory of God, and the salvation of our souls; and that in such matters we *ought to have regard, above all, to the commandment of God, who is King of kings and Lord of lords: each of us rendering Him account for himself, without caring the least in the world about majority or minority.*

“We form no judgment on that which concerns you, beloved lords; and we are content to pray God daily that He will bring us all to unity of faith, in truth, charity, and holiness, through Jesus Christ, our Throne of Grace, and our only Mediator.

“But in what concerns ourselves, adhesion to your resolution (and let every honest man be judge!) would be acting against our conscience, condemning a doctrine that we maintain to be Christian, and pronouncing that it ought to be abolished in our States—if we could do so without trouble. This would be to deny our Lord Jesus Christ, to reject his holy Word, and thus give Him just reason to deny us in turn before his Father, as He has threatened.

“For this reason we reject the yoke that is imposed on us. And although it is universally known that, in our States, the Holy Sacrament of the body and blood of our Lord is becomingly administered, we cannot adhere to what the edict proposes against the Sacramentarians, seeing that the imperial edict did not speak of them; that they have not been heard; and that we cannot resolve upon such important points before next council.

“Moreover, the new edict declaring the ministers shall preach the gospel, explaining it according to the writings accepted by the holy Christian Church, *we think that, for this regulation to have any value, we should first agree on what is meant by the true and holy Church.*

"Now, seeing that there is great diversity of opinion in this respect; that there is no sure doctrine but such as is conformable to the Word of God; that the Lord forbids the teaching of any other doctrine; that each text of the Holy Scriptures ought to be explained by other and clearer texts; that this holy book is in all things necessary for the Christian, easy to be understood, and calculated to scatter darkness; we are resolved to maintain the pure and exclusive preaching of his only Word, such as it is contained in the Biblical books of the Old and New Testament, without adding anything thereto that may be contrary to it. This Word is the only truth; it is the sure doctrine of all life, and can never fail or deceive us. He who builds on this foundation shall stand against the powers of hell, whilst all human vanities that are set against it shall fall before the face of God.

"For these reasons, beloved lords, we earnestly entreat you to weigh carefully our grievances and our motives. If you do not yield to our request, we PROTEST by these presents, before God, our only Creator, Preserver, Redeemer, and Saviour, and who will be one day our Judge, as well as before all men and all creatures, that we, for us and for our people, neither consent nor adhere, in any manner whatsoever, to the proposed decree; in anything that is contrary to God and to his Holy Word, to our right conscience, to the salvation of our souls, and to the last Decree of Spires."

It was the firm determination of the emperor to break the spirit that prompted this grand protest, which gave the name "*Protestant*" to the reformers.

Burgesses of Nuremberg present Lambert's treatise to the emperor.

He entered Italy, on his way to Germany, with the utmost pomp, rendering public homage to the Pope. In direct contrast with the magnificent cavalcade that attended the emperor in his progress, we find

three plain burgesses of Nuremberg deputed by the princes to convey to him, whilst on his journey, the Protest of Spires. Having secured an audience with his majesty, one of the deputation said: "It is to

the Supreme Judge that each of us must render an account, and not to creatures who turn at every wind. It is better to fall into the most cruel necessity, than to incur the anger of God. Our nation will obey no decrees that are based on any other foundation than the Holy Scriptures."

Another deputy had in his hand a small volume bound in velvet, and richly ornamented, which he seemed to prize more than all the jewels of the imperial crown. *It contained the work of Francis Lambert, entitled, the "Sum of Christianity," explaining the simple principles of Church polity, contained in the New Testament.* The emperor directed the book to be transferred to the Pope for careful examination. One of the Spanish bishops who was present, glancing over the pages of the volume, observed a passage to the effect that Christ enjoined his apostles not to exercise lordship. The deputies were put under arrest, but subsequently obtained liberation, and to improve their opportunity, sent a report of these proceedings to their brethren in Germany.

The emperor proceeded on his way to Germany, and a war of extermination seemed to be imminent. "Do not hesitate," said the papal legate, "to confiscate their property, establish the inquisition, and punish these obstinate heretics with fire and sword." At this critical juncture, Alfonso de Valdes, the Spanish chancellor of the emperor, with Cornelius Sceffer, his co-secretary, sought a private interview with Melancthon, at Augsburg, May 11th, 1530, in

Threatened
war of ex-
termina-
tion.

order to effect, if possible, mutual reconciliation between Protestants and the Roman Catholics. A scheme of comprehension was discussed. Melan-
Melan-
thon's
scheme of
"compre-
hension."
 thon, at the suggestion of the emperor, prepared a summary, known as the "Augsburg Confession;" but without securing a common basis for the agreement of the opposing parties. "There is no doctrine," said Melancthon, "in which we differ from the Romish Church. We venerate the universal authority of the Roman Pontiff, and we are ready to obey him, provided he does not reject us, and that of his clemency, which he is accustomed to show towards all nations, he will kindly pardon or approve certain little things that it is no longer possible for us to change now, then will you reject those who appear as suppliants before you? Will you pursue them with fire and sword? Alas! nothing draws upon us in Germany so much hatred as the unshaken firmness with which we maintain the doctrines of the Romish Church. But, with the aid of God, we will remain faithful, even unto death, to Christ, and to the Roman Church, although you should reject us."

Luther, from the place of his retreat at Coburg, watched the course of the diet with intense solicitude. The report of the concessions made by Melancthon filled him with horror. He was astounded at his weakness. In a letter to Melancthon, dated June 29th, 1530, he says:—

"God has placed this cause in a certain position, which neither your rhetoric nor your philosophy have been able to fathom; that position is the light of faith. There all things

are inaccessible to the human sight, whoever desires to render them visible, tangible, and comprehensible, only gets for his pains trouble and tears, as you have done. ^{Luther's re-} God has declared to us that He dwells in the ^{monstrance,} clouds, and is seated amidst the darkness. Had Moses sought to escape from the army of Pharaoh, Israel, in all probability would have remained to this day in Egypt. 1530.

"If you are destitute of faith, why not seek consolation in the faith of others, for some there necessarily are, who believe even though we ourselves are devoid of belief? What then! Shall it be said that Christ has abandoned us before the consummation of the appointed days? If He be not with us, where, let me ask you, where is He in this world? If we are not the Church, or a branch of the Church, where is the Church? Is the Church, Ferdinand? Is it the Duke of Bavaria? The Popes? the Turks, or their likes? If God's promise rests not with us, with whom is it? You do not comprehend the state of affairs. Satan has confounded you, and rendered you feeble. That Christ may restore you and heal you is my sincere and earnest prayer!"

"June 30th, 1530; but all that I can write here is utterly thrown away, seeing you are determined, according to your philosophy, to govern all things by the mere force of reason; that is to say, to make unreason dominate over reason. Proceed, however! Destroy yourselves in this vain effort, and that without being able to perceive that neither your hand nor your mind can control the crisis, nor that it will have none of your aid."

The position of Melancthon was far from being enviable. "You talk to me," he said to Luther, (29th June, 1530), "of your labours, your dangers, your tears, and I!—is mine ^{Unenviable position of Melancthon.} a bed of roses? Do not I bear part and parcel of your burdens? Oh! would to God my cause was one which admitted 'of tears!'"

Luther had now to encourage his friend as well

as to administer stimulus and reproof. He writes : "Grace and peace in Christ, in Christ, I say, and not in the world. Amen. I hate, with exceeding hatred, those extreme cares which consume you. If the cause is unjust, abandon it : if the cause is just, why should we belie the promises of Him who commands us to sleep without fear ? Can the devil do more than kill us ? Christ will not be wanting to the work of justice and of truth. He lives ! He reigns ! What fear, then, can we have ? God is powerful to upraise his cause, if it is overthrown, to make it proceed if it remains motionless ; and if we are not worthy of it, He will do it by others ?"

The ignominious negotiation with the papal party failed, and Melancthon recovered his intrepidity. When he expressed the hope that the Reformers would be allowed to follow the dictates of conscience, he was met with the reply : "No ! the See of Rome cannot err !" "Then," rejoined Melancthon, "we commit ourselves and our cause to God. 'If God be for us, who can be against us ?' We have, in our country, more than forty thousand persons, including ministers of the Church, with their families, and poor parishioners, whom we cannot abandon. Let us, then, do what we can ; we may look for the help of the Son of God, whose cause it is. We will endure any labours and difficulties in the duties of our calling. Should it be needful, we will even fight and die, if God requires, rather than so many souls shall be betrayed."*

Failure of
the nego-
ciation.

It was this readiness to engage in war for

* Melcheor Adam, vit. Philos.

religion that proved the ruin of their cause. The league of Smalkald followed the Diet of Augsburg and its subsequent disasters ; but amidst all vicissitudes the truth gradually advanced ; there was an undergrowth of religious sentiment derived from the Word of God, that could not be stopped either by the defects of the Reformers, or the violence of their foes.

CHAPTER XV.

THE movements of Luther were watched with much anxiety by the friends of the Papacy in England.

Tonstall's
report to
Wolsey
from the
Diet of
Worms.
1521.

Bishop Tonstall, who attended the Diet at Worms, writing to Wolsey on the occasion, says: "The Germans everywhere are so addicted to Luther, that rather than he shall be oppressed by the Pope's authority, who hath already condemned his opinions, a hundred thousand of the people will sacrifice their lives. His declaration by some idle fellow hath been translated into Latin, which I send your Grace herein enclosed, to the intent ye may see it, and burn it when ye have done, and also that your Grace may call before you the printers and booksellers, and give them a strait charge that they bring none of his books into England, nor translate them into English. *The matter is run so far, the princes cannot appease it.*" *

The report of the proceedings of the Diet of Worms stimulated the curiosity of many to learn the sentiments of the monk who had caused such agitation at the court of Rome. Archbishop Warham wrote in the most lugubrious strain

* Master's MSS. Jesus College; Brewer.

on the matter to Wolsey. He says, March 8th, 1521 :—

“Lately I received letters from the University of Oxford, and in those same certain news, of which I am very sorry to hear. For I am informed that divers of that university be infected with the heresies of Luther, and of others of that sort, having among them a great number of the books of the said perverse doctrine. I doubt not but it is to your good Grace right pensivefull hearing. Pity it were that through the lewdness of one or two cankered members which I understand have induced no small number of young and uncircumspect fools to give ear unto them, the whole university should run into the infamy of so heinous a crime—the hearing whereof should be right delectable and pleasant to the open Lutherans beyond the sea, and in secret be hither (on this side), whereof they would take heart and confidence that their pestilent doctrines should increase and multiply, seeing both the universities of England infected therewith, whereof the one hath many years been void of all heresies, and the other hath now taken upon her the praise that she was undefiled; and nevertheless, now she is thought to be the original and occasion and cause of the fall in Oxford.” The primate, in his lamentation, suggests that “the captains of the erroneous doctrines be punished to the fearful example of all other. He is assured that ‘the whole number of young scholars suspected,’ be marvellous sorry and repentant that ever they had such books or heard of any of Luther’s opinions. He would not have them, therefore, called up to London, because ‘it should engender great obloquy and slander to the university, both behither the sea and beyond, to the sorrow of all good men and the pleasure of heretics, desiring to have many followers.’ ‘The less bruit the better.’ It is the desire of the university that a commission should be given to ‘some sad father’ to examine, ‘not the heads,’ but the ‘novices’ which be not yet cankered in the said errors, and to put them to such correction as the quality of their transgression shall require.”*

Warham
on the
State of
the Uni-
versities,
1521.

Several “sad” fathers “with divers learned men

* Calig. B. vi. 171, B. M.

and bishops," met in the cardinal's house, and solemnly condemned the doctrine of Luther. A declaration to this effect was sent to Oxford, "and fastened on the dial in St. Mary's Churchyard, by Nicolas Kraker, the maker and contriver thereof;" the books of Luther were burnt at both universities.

The court of Rome betrayed great solicitude on account of the spread of the writings of Luther in England. Campeggio, in a letter to Wolsey, March 30th, 1521, writes: "The Lutheran heresy has been condemned at a synod. I send a copy of the decree. I shall be glad if the king will write to the emperor, as the Pope has done, to crush this pestilence entirely. Write to Chievres (in France) to the same effect." *

Cardinal de Medici on the same day wrote to Wolsey, to assure him that from the decrees of the Pope he had sufficient power to burn Lutheran books. He sent with his despatch the bull of the Pope to be published in England, with a book "put out by that damnable heretic" (Luther), and gently intimates that the author should be condemned to the flames. The Pope, he adds, commends Wolsey for not suffering the books to be imported or sold; but that remedy, in his opinion, will not be sufficient, and his Holiness would be more satisfied to hear that the writings of the heretic were collected for a general bonfire.

Henry VIII., in obedience to this call from Rome, prepared himself for his great theological

* Vit. B. iv. 86, B.M.

achievement as the champion of the Pope. Pace tells Wolsey, April 16th, 1521, that he found the king reading a new book of Luther's, when he presented the Pope's bull and brief, "at which the king was well contented." "Showing unto me that it was very joyous to have these tidings from the Pope's Holiness, at such a time as he had taken upon him the defence of Christ's Church with his pen. The king desired that without delay all that were appointed to examine the books of Luther should be congregated in his presence, and that Wolsey should write to the emperor and princes-electors. 'His book,' continues Pace, 'is to be sent not only to Rome, but also unto France, and other nations as shall appear convenient. So that all the church is more bound to this good and virtuous prince for the vehement zeal he beareth unto the same than I can express.'" *

Henry VIII. prepares for the defence of the Church of Rome.

Wolsey was equally prompt in trying to meet the wishes of his Holiness. On the 12th of May, 1521, an imposing procession for this purpose was formed in St. Paul's Cathedral.

Burning of Luther's books at St. Paul's.

"The chronicler tells us that the Lord Thomas Wolsey, by the grace of God legate de Latere, Cardinal of Saint Cicely, and Archbishop of York, came unto 'Saint Powle's Church of London, with the moste part of the byshops of the realme.' He was received with due homage by 'Mr. Richard Pace, the Dean of the said church.' Four doctors 'bare a canope of gold over him, goinge to the high altar, where he made his oblacion and was censed; which done, he proceeded forth as abovesaid to the crosse in Powle's Yeard, where was ordeined a scaffold for the same cause, and he settinge under his cloth of estate which was

* Vit. B. iv. 96, B. M.

ordained for him, his two crosses on everie side of him. On his right hand, sittinge on the place where he set his feete, the Pope's Ambassador, and next him the Archbishop of Canterbury; on his left hand the Emperor's Ambassador, and nexte him the Byshope of Duresme, and the other byshops, with other noble prelates sate on two formes outer right forth; and the Byshop of Rochester made a sermon by the consentinge of the whole clergie of England, by the commandment of the Pope, against one Martinus Eleutherus, and all his workes, because he erred sore, and spake against the hollie faithe; and denounced them accursed which kept anie of his bookes." *

More interest must have been felt in the burning of the books than in the performance of the preacher. His sermon was extremely dull. According to custom he announced his text in Latin: "*Quum vellent Paracletus quem mittam vobis Spiritus veritatis qui de patre procedet ille testimonium perhibebit me.*"

"Full often," he said, "when the day is clear and the sun shineth bright, riseth in some quarter of the heaven, a thick black cloud that darkeneth alike all the face of the heaven, and shadoweth from us the clear light of the sun and stirreth an hideous tempest and maketh a great lightning and thundereth terribly, so that the weak souls and feeble hearts be put in great fear, and made almost desperato for lack of comfort. In like manner it is in the Church of Christ." "Martin Luther has stirred a mighty storm and tempest; he thundereth terribly against the Pope's authority.

"I would show," first, "that the instructions of this holy gospel pertains to the universal Church of Christ. Secondly, that the Head of the universal Church (*jure divino*) is the Pope. Thirdly, that Martin Luther which denieth this head, hath not in him the spirit of truth.

"In proof of the main point the preacher said, 'When ye see a tree stand upright upon the ground, and his branches spread abroad full of leaves and fruit, if the sun shines clear, this tree

* Stowe.

maketh a shadow, in the which shadow ye may perceive a figure of the branches of the leaves and of the fruit. Everything that is in the tree has somewhat answering unto it in the shadow, and contrariwise every part of the shadow hath something answering unto it in the tree. A man's eye may lead him from every part of the tree till every part of the shadow, and, again, from every part of the shadow till every part of the tree answereth thereunto.

"Every man may point to any certain part of the shadow and say this is the shadow of such a branch, and this is the shadow of a leaf, and this is the shadow of the whole tree. But so is the law of Moses, and the synagogue of the Jews was but a shadow of the universal Church of Christ.

"Now then to my purpose. In the governance 'was twayne hedes,' appointed one under another, Moses and Aaron, whereof be they the shadow? Withouten doubt they be the shadow of Christ and his vicar Saint Peter."

We need not follow the preacher in his shadowy discourse further.

The chronicler adds, "There were manie burned in the said churchyard of Luther's said bookes duringe the sermon, which ended, my Lord Cardinall went home to dinner with all the other prelates."

Dean Pace took the trouble to translate the sermon into Latin, but from the letter prefixed to it by Nicolas Wilson, we may infer that his pains were ill bestowed. Lutheranism still advanced, and the advocates of the Papacy were unequal to the task of answering their opponents. "Luther," says Wilson, "is surrounded with shrewd men, and at the same time excellent scholars and extremely popular. His influence over them is such that when once they have adopted his teaching, they despise all others, consider themselves the exclusive possessors of sacred learning, and wrest the Scriptures to their

will. "When Luther has once rendered them invincible, he teaches them to simulate *constancy, frugality, labour, humility, the greatest order and zeal for propagating the glory of Christ, and equal grief and indignation against any who oppose (what they call) sound doctrine; in short, every virtue which pertains to probity or holiness of life.*"

On the 14th of May, 1521, Wolsey issued a commission to all the bishops of England, commanding them to cause any books of Martin Luther's errors and heresies, which they could find within their dioceses, to be seized and sent up to him, and ordering a notice to be given in every church where the people were assembled at mass, by which all persons who had such books in their possession were to deliver them up within fifteen days, under pain of excommunication. He enjoined them, at the same time, to affix on the folding doors of the cathedrals and parish churches a list containing some of Luther's "chief errors." Unconsciously in doing this he took the most effectual method to awaken attention to the questions raised by the Saxon reformer.

Commis-
sion to
destroy
Luther's
writings.

The zeal of the king was not less ardent. He began to write to the courts of Europe, as one who had a special commission to prevent the further spread of Lutheran doctrine. In a long address to the King of Bavaria, May 20th, 1521, he says: "We most earnestly implore and exhort you, by the hereditary and innate affection which we have for your person, and by the common cause of your salvation in Christ, that you bear a willing and hearty hand in averting

Letter of
Henry
VIII. to
the King of
Bavaria,
1521.

this destruction which overhangs us; that you delay not a moment to seize and exterminate this Luther, who is a rebel against Christ, and unless he repent, deliver himself and his audacious treatises to the flames.”*

On the same day, May 21st, 1521, the king wrote to the Pope to explain his intentions to help the Church. “Ever since,” he says, “I knew of heresy in Germany, I have made it my study to extirpate it. The poison has now spread so far that it will not readily yield to our attack. I have thought it best to call the learned of my kingdom to consider these errors, to denounce them and exhort others to do the same, that all may see that I am ready to defend the Church not only with my arms but with the resources of my mind.”†

His letter
to the
Pope.

The first work the royal polemic proposed to undertake was to refute the treatise entitled, “*De Captivitate Babylonica*.” The treatise of Henry VIII. is entitled, “A Defence of the Seven Sacraments against Martin Luther, by the most invincible King of England, Lord of Ireland, Henry, eighth of that name.”

Treatise
of Henry
VIII.
against
Luther.

The ordinary arguments in support of the Romish system were set forth in lucid order, but the royal author seems to trust rather in the force of bitter contempt than in that of dispassionate reasoning. “There is no doctor so innocent in the world,” he says of Luther, “no saint so exalted in

* Gerdes Hist. Reform. Religionis, vol. iv., Appendix, xxii.

† Addit. MS. 15, 387, f. 88.

heaven, no scholar so skilled in the knowledge of the Bible, whom this petty doctor, this paltry saint, this shadowy doctor does not reject, in the pride of his self-constituted authority." He is a "shameless scribbler," "a hellish wolf," "a venomous viper," "a limb of Satan."

"Let us arm ourselves with double armour, that with the weapons of truth we may vanquish the man who contends with those of error; but with terrestrial armour also, in order, that *should he show himself obstinate in his malice, the hand of the public executioner may constrain him to be silent, and that, for once at least, he may be useful to the world by the terrible example of his death.*"

In the fourth chapter of his treatise the king says: "Luther shows plainly that his intention is to flatter the Bohemians whose perfidiousness he before detested, for none of those whom he calls Papists and flatterers of the Pope, do so much flatter the Roman prelates as Luther flatters the very scum of the Bohemian commonalty, and not without reason indeed, for he foresees that the Germans (whom he formerly deceived under the form of a simple sheep) would reject him as soon as they should perceive him to be a devouring wolf; and therefore he insinuates himself into the esteem of the Bohemians, and makes himself friends of the mammon of iniquity, as much as he is able, that when he is banished his own country he may pass unto that of those into whose errors he has already entered."

The court of Rome felt great satisfaction in the work to which the king had devoted himself. Car-

dinal de Medici expressed the desire that as soon as it was ready it might be sent by an express courier. Nothing he said seemed to be wanting for the complete destruction of Martin Luther, "unless it were God's good pleasure that he should come to England."

Campeggio intimated, June 8th, 1521,* to Wolsey, that it was resolved to bestow some honourable name or title on the king in return for his piety in resisting the spread of the Lutheran heresy; but the matter was deferred on account of its importance. "The whole consistory," he says, June 9th, 1521, "is delighted."† June 27th, 1521, "The College of Cardinals have been deliberating about the title for the king, but they could not determine, and would be glad to have Wolsey's opinion; some proposed "Apostolicus," others "Protector."‡

New title
proposed
for Henry
VIII.

In due time the wonderful treatise was sent to Rome, sumptuously bound, with a number of copies to be read by the cardinals and prelates. Wolsey, August 25th, 1521, gave Clerk formal instructions as to the manner in which it should be presented, especially directing him to call the attention of his Holiness to the circumstance that the king had styled himself the *very defender of the Catholic faith of Christ*.

Book
presented
to the Pope.

Very flattering compliments were sent from Rome to the king, but to his mortification the title to be conferred upon him was left in abeyance. Clerk writes, September 14th, 1521, "the Pope is reading the book." Five days after, Campeggio,

* Vit. B. iv. 113.

† R. O. MS.

‡ Vit. B. iv. 116.

(September 19th, 1521) says he is overcome with joy at reading the king's "*Aureus Libellus*." "All who have seen it say, that, though so many have written on the same subject, nothing could be better expressed or argued, and he seems to have been inspired by an angelic and celestial than by a human spirit. We can hereafter truly call him, 'Lutherio Mastica.' A brief, also, he says, is to be prepared, which the Pope with his own hand will direct to the king, and which he would write words to the effect 'that he does not think his Grace can be better employed.'"

"His Grace" in the meantime was losing all patience.

Clerk writes to Wolsey, October 10th, 1521, to tell him that he has informed the Pope that his oration is ready, and asked for a public consistory. As men's minds are so much infected with Lutheranism, and *the people "so frowardly disposed," he is afraid of stirring a controversy.* He promised, however, to do all that is necessary to declare his approbation of the book, and asked Clerk for the substance of his oration, that his Holiness might be ready with an answer. On Wednesday, October 2nd, 1521, the Pope having summoned the consistory, the master of the ceremonies ordered that Clerk should kneel all the time of his oration. "Whereat I was somewhat abashed," he writes, "for methought I should not have my heart, or my spirits so much at my liberty. I feared greatly lest they should not serve me so well kneeling as they would standing." The Pope's Holiness sat in his majesty upon a throne three steps from the ground,

underneath a cloth of state; afore him in a large quadrant upon stools sat the bishops in their consistorial habits to the number of twenty. After kissing the Pope's foot, when he would have returned to his place, his holiness took him by the shoulders and caused him to kiss first one cheek and then the other; then having a stool before him, and kneeling, he delivered his oration.

In the course of his address, premeditated so long before, Clerk expatiated on the greatness of the work achieved by the king in refuting Luther.

The new enemy, he said, equals all heresiarchs in learning, and exceeds all in wickedness. So effectual had been the work of the king that England was entirely purged of heresy. "With us," he said, "the Church of God is in profound tranquillity, no differences, no disputes, no ambiguous words, murmuring, or complaints are heard among the people; all troubles of mind, all apprehensions of strange revolutions in the world, and of the reign of Christ are now banished." The Pope replied in Latin and with becoming brevity.

Clerk's
oration in
praise of
the king.

The title was formally sanctioned, but it was not until November 4th, 1521, that Leo X. wrote to Henry VIII. to apprize him of the act and to give him "infinite thanks."

The completion of the formalities respecting the title was, however, still delayed. Leo X. died, and after all the king feared that some defect might remain to destroy the validity of the long-coveted distinction; Clerk did the best in his power to soothe the irritation of his royal master, and Cardinal de Medici wrote to Wolsey "to have patience."

It was a proud day for Wolsey when he was really able to produce the bull from Rome conveying to Henry VIII. the title of "DEFENDER OF THE FAITH." In his speech on the occasion he said: "When John Clerk, the king's ambassador at Rome, presented the king's book against Luther to the late Pope, in presence of the College of Cardinals, it was beautiful to hear with what exultation the Pope and cardinals broke out into the praises of Henry, declaring that no one could have devised a better antidote to the poison of heresy, and that Henry had, with great eloquence, completely refuted Luther."

Title of
Defender of
the Faith
conferred.

Henry VIII., in his exuberant delight, expressed his desire that the cardinal should share the glory to some extent, though of course he could not divide with him the title. Pace writing to Wolsey, November 17th, 1521, tells him that "his Highness saith that God hath sent unto him a little learning whereby he hath attempted to write against the erroneous opinions and heresies of Luther, yet he never intended so to do, afore he was by your Grace moved and led thereunto. Wherefore his Highness saith that your Grace must of good congruity be partner of all the honour and glory he hath obtained by that act."

The vanity
of the king
gratified.

The bull conferring the title, in view of the facts, has the semblance of delicate and finished irony. After a characteristic preamble, the Pope says:—

"Having thus weighed and diligently considered your singular merits, we could not have invented a more congruous name, nor more worthy of your majesty, than this worthy and most excellent title, which as often as you hear or read, you shall

remember your own merits and virtues. Nor will you by this title exalt yourself or become proud, but according to your accustomed prudence rather more humble in the faith of Christ, and more strong and constant in your devotion to this holy see, by which you were exalted. And you shall rejoice in our Lord, who is the giver of all good things, for leaving such a perpetual and everlasting monument of your glory to posterity, and showing the way to others; that if they also covet to be invested with such a title, they may study to do such actions, and to follow the steps of your excellent majesty."

Compliments were heaped on every side on the royal author. "Cardinal Sena," Pace says, "of all men living commendeth the king's boke, which wheresoever he become, he hath ever with him and hath made hereunto a repertory, and I suppose ther is no boke wherewith he hath so great familiarite contynually as with that; we never mete but I have a commendacion of that boke, that lasteth one quarter of a houre."

Alas! for the vanity of all literary glory, the king, intoxicated with this incense of flattery, had his complacency sorely disturbed by the rude criticisms of Luther.

In his dedication of the treatise to Lord Sebastian Shlick, Luther alludes to the insinuation of Henry VIII. that he was about to escape to the Bohemians, in the following terms:—

"My Lord Count,—For three long years the Papists have been pretending that I have been going to run away to Bohemia. They long to hear the news of my departure, that they may raise the cry, the heretic has fled to the heretics—we have gained the day. Beaten by pieces, not daring to stand before me. Fools and blind! they fancy they will be mistaken for giants, should I only start for Bohemia. Thrice I appeared before them. I went to Worms, even when I knew the emperor, in violation of his solemn covenant, was ready to seize me; for, to the eternal dis-

grace of Germany and its princes, formerly renowned for inviolable faith, now, out of obsequiousness to the Roman idol (without hesitation), trample on their most solemn engagements. Under these circumstances I went to Worms—trembling Luther leaped into the jaws of Behemoth. Well, what have the giants done? During these three whole years not a man of them has ventured to show himself in Wittenberg, and yet the creatures hope to triumph in my flight, and that while the whole world is laughing to scorn their incapacity and cowardice, they whisper out of mouseholes that Luther is thinking of running away. Thus the King of England, in his blustering book, what an immensity of foam, to be sure, he has wasted on my imaginary flight to Bohemia. The blockhead! Well, I stay. I will not give one iota to cast up against me. I will not allow one moment's breathing time in their inconceivable malice. Therefore here I stay.

"But I fear I am too severe. I must relent a little; and therefore, lest our wizards, the oracular Papists, should die of the spleen, they shall have some crumbs of comfort. I will then, after another fashion, fulfil their prophecy. I will go to Bohemia. I will dwell there in my books, and thus I will so animate the inhabitants. Then Bohemia shall be exalted in honour—go on and prosper—the reproach of Bohemia shall pass away.

"Two years ago," says the undaunted reformer, "I published a little book called, 'The Captivity of the Church at Babylon.'

Luther's
reply. It horribly vexed and confounded the Papists, who spared neither lies nor invective in replying to it. I readily forgive them both the one and the other, neither having hurt me. There were some who tried to swallow it down with a laugh, but the hook was too hard and too pointed for their throats. And now, quite recently, the Lord Henry, not by the grace of God King of England, has written in Latin against my treatise.

"He thought to himself, doubtless, Luther is so hunted about he will have no opportunity of replying to me; his books are all burnt, so my calumnies will remain unconfuted. I am a king, and people will needs believe me. I need not fear to throw anything that comes first to hand in the poor monk's teeth, to publish what I like, to hunt down his character as I think. Ah! ah! my worthy Henry, you have reckoned without your host in this

matter ; you have had your say, I will have mine. You shall hear truths that will not amuse you at all. I will make you smart for your tricks."

Under the supposition that the treatise of Henry VIII. was compiled by Lee, a Thomist, Luther utters this contemptuous defiance :—

"Come on, swine that you are ! burn me if you dare ! I am here to be seized upon. My ashes shall pursue you after my death, though you throw them to all the winds, into all the seas. As to myself, to the words of the fathers, of men, of angels, of devils, I oppose not old customs, nor the multitude of men, but the Word of eternal majesty, that gospel which my adversaries themselves are compelled to recognize. There I take my stand, there I take my seat, there I take my resting place, there is my triumph, there my glory ; from thence I defy Popes, Thomists, Henricists, Sophists, and the gates of hell. I heed very little the words of men, whatever their sanctity may have been, and as little do I heed tradition, or custom, fallacious custom. The Word of God is superior to all else. If I have the Divine Majesty on my side, what care I, even though a thousand Augustins, a thousand Cyprians, a thousand churchfuls of Henrys rise against me."

Luther closes with a semi-apology : "In fine, if my asperity toward the king offend any one, let him take this answer, that I have to do in this book with unfeeling monsters, who have despised all my best and modest writings, as well as my humble submission, and have become more hardened by my modesty."

All this was very shocking to the royal polemic, but there was no remedy, except that which proved even worse than the evil it was intended to remove. Sir Thomas More entered the lists in defence of his master, but only to descend to a depth of ribald scurrility

More and Fisher enter the lists against Luther.

that, in respect for common decency, must be left untouched. Bishop Fisher also came to the help of the king with no better success. He felt ashamed, he said, to enjoy the comfort of learned leisure when he saw his "most illustrious sovereign" so engaged in the warfare. He advocated burning at the stake as the most effectual check to the doctrines of the Reformation. Luther, he said, maintains that to burn heretics is contrary to the will of the Holy Spirit. This is no new heresy, it is only that which has vexed the Church many years. Heretics desire nothing more than that they may with impunity infect the Christian people, whom they more greedily desire to devour with their pestilent opinions than wolves do the sheep."

The credit of Henry VIII. was lowered by all this drivelling. It must also be admitted that Luther gained nothing by mere invective and vituperation. His own friends, offended by the tone of his address to Henry VIII., and King Christian, after a time, induced him to write an apology to his majesty, it being understood that he was about to establish the Reformation in England.

"Most serene king," writes Luther to Henry VIII., "most illustrious prince, I should be afraid to address your majesty when I remember how much I have offended you in the book, which, under the influence of bad advice, rather than of my own feelings, I published against you, through pride and vanity. What your majesty's anger and emboldens me, is your royal goodness, of which I have proof every day in my conversations and correspondence. No man you will not bear an immortal hatred to me. I know that the writing, published in the name of the King of England, is not the work of the King of England, as some would have it believed, who do not conceive that they hereby impute to your majesty. Among

them is that enemy of God and man, Lee, the Bishop of York. I blush now and scarcely dare raise my eyes to you. I, who by means of these workers of iniquity have not feared to insult so great a prince—I, who am a worm and corruption, and who merit contempt and disdain.

“Prostrate in all humility at your feet, I beg and beseech your majesty, by the cross and glory of Christ to pardon me my offences, according to the divine precept. If your majesty thinks proper that in another work I should recall my words and glorify your name, vouchsafe to transmit to me your orders. I am ready and full of good will. What is Luther compared with your majesty? Nothing. Nevertheless, the glory of my God will gain if I be permitted to write to the King of England in favour of the evangelical law.”*

The king replied :

“You tell me that you blush for your work, I can well believe. Why did you not add for all your books, as they contain but one tissue of gross errors and foolish heresies, founded on neither logic nor science? As to my letter, which in your opinion was the work of a captious Sophist, it is my own production, as many witnesses worthier of credit than yourself can testify; and the more it displeases you the greater pleasure do I feel in acknowledging myself its author. Your viper tongue endeavours, but in vain, to blast the reputation of the Archbishop of York. After all, what importance ought to be attached to the insults of a being like yourself, of one who has mocked at the Catholic Church, ridiculed the fathers and holy apostles, blasphemed the saints and blessed mother of God, and insulted the Lord himself, by making Him the author of all crime. You say that you dare not look at me. I am not astonished at your venturing to look at any one in the face.”†

These letters are important as exhibiting the relative position of parties. “The wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God.”‡

* Opera Lutheri, t. ix. p. 234; Cochl., p. 156; Ullenberg, p. 502.

† Moretinum principis Henrici VIII. regis Angliæ et Franciæ, ad Martini Lutheri, Epistolam responsio.

‡ James i. 20.

There can be no doubt that the envenomed feeling of Henry VIII. against Luther occasioned those who received the doctrines of reformation in England to suffer the greater persecution. The king could not reach Luther at Wittenberg, but he could consign his defenceless subjects to the flames who did not accept his own views of religion.

The most extraordinary correspondence of the period now under review is that of Wolsey, in his repeated and fruitless efforts to obtain the Pontificate. The letters are voluminous, and are worthy of study, as exhibiting the mode adopted by the Cardinals of Rome in the election of the Chief Pastor. Wolsey had three agents at Rome to watch the movements of parties, report the state of affairs, and to act individually and in concert to secure the great object of his ambition. The vanity, untruthfulness, duplicity, and utter disregard of right principle, revealed in the letters of Wolsey is astounding; and not the less so the chicane, mutual deception, and violence of the Sacred College. Wolsey wrote letters in his own recommendation to be adopted by the king; instructed his agents to make statements diametrically opposite to different parties, according to circumstances; and, whilst systematically giving instructions to intimidate some, to flatter others, and to bribe the younger cardinals, in the name of the king, with money or promises of livings and endowments, he has the effrontery to pretend that he is seeking the welfare of Christendom. All his manœuvres failed; the king was disappointed; and Wolsey lost influence and was cast aside. The mention of a single proposal of his

“orators,” or agents, at Rome will be sufficient to show the spirit of the negociation. Adrian VI., because of the wars, had great difficulty in reaching Rome after his election, and it was thought that he might be compelled to sail from England. Clerk, one of Wolsey’s “orators,” writes, February 1st, 1522: *“If the Cardinal could induce the Pope to come to England, there might great chance arise thereby; for the Pope is aged and sickly, and might fortune to die in those quarters; and, if he so did, your Grace, by reason thereof, might be present at the next election, and these here should be too far off to come hither; for ye should not be bound to tarry ‘pro absentibus’ but ten days ‘post mortem,’ and your Grace having only with you such cardinals as be in those quarters, would then more easily attain your purpose.”** This cunning scheme, like all the rest, fell through, for Adrian kept away from the English coast. Wolsey was moody and discontented, but Campeggio told him that the election of Adrian was “the work of the Holy Spirit,” and that it was useless, in consequence, to complain.

We return to the more interesting subject of the Reformation. The exciting discussions between the Reformers and their opponents aroused general interest. In 1519, a great many copies were brought to Paris of the Leipsic disputation between Luther and Eck.† “The universities of Cologne and Louvain condemned many of Luther’s books to the flames, and the same thing was done with many of them in Germany.”

Advance of
the Re-
formation.

* Vit. B. v. 33.

† Balæ, *Historia Universitatis Parisiensis*, 1673, tom. vi., A.D. 1519.

Burchard Schenck, a German nobleman, writing from Venice to Spalatine, on the 19th of September, 1520, says: "According to your request, I have read the books of Martin Luther, and I can assure you that he has been much esteemed in this place for some time past."

We have already noticed the progress of the truth in France and in Scotland. "The Word of God grew and multiplied," springing up in many places secretly, and by means it is impossible now to trace. Apart from the track of the leading reformers, associations of Christian believers were formed—on a more simple and scriptural basis than those placed under the regulations framed in Saxony and Switzerland. We have an example, in the labours of HENRY ZUTPHEN,* of the manner in which the light of the gospel was extended to remote points by the agency of men whose zeal was awakened by the strength of their convictions, and the warmth of their attachment to the cause of Christ. Zutphen, after spending some time with Luther at Wittenberg, went to Antwerp, intending to preach the gospel, but was driven out of the city. He intended to return to Wittenberg, but on his way thither he was detained at Bremen by "certain godly citizens," who requested him to give them one or two brief exhortations upon the gospel. He readily assented to their request, and the desire was expressed that he should preach openly to the people. Great interest was awakened in those who attended; and, when the monks began

* Foxe. Luther Opp., vol. vii. fol. 495; Muhlius, *Dissertationes Histor. Theolog.*, pp. 369—472.

to raise opposition, the citizens defended the preacher. The bull of Leo X., and the decree of the emperor issued at the Diet of Worms, were affixed to the porch of the church, to warn the people of the consequences that would follow if any countenance were given to Lutheran doctrine; but this only increased the desire of the inhabitants to know more of the principles so fiercely denounced.

In the midst of this awakening, Zutphen received letters, in 1524, from Nicholas Boyes, parish priest, and other faithful Christians of Meldorf, a town in Dithmarsh, to preach unto them the gospel of Christ. These letters Zutphen submitted to six brethren, in order to take counsel with them in the matter. He said that he felt himself to be a debtor, not only unto them, but to all others who required his aid; and that he thought it to be his duty to go to Dithmarsh, to "see what God would work by him." He requested their advice as to the best means of taking his departure, so that he might not be stopped by the importunity of the people. The brethren objected to his removal, and entreated him to continue for a time, that the gospel might take deeper root, and its influence be extended to the neighbouring villages. They intimated that he would not be at liberty to depart without the consent of the "whole commonalty." Zutphen replied, that there were now in Bremen many godly and learned men under whose teaching they might, in his absence, become more fully acquainted with the truth; and that the people of Dithmarsh had the stronger claim, from their greater exposure to the violence of persecution.

The objection that he had not obtained "*the consent of the whole congregation*" was not a valid one against his removal, since he intended only a temporary absence, "for a month or two, to lay a foundation, and then return again." He would have consulted the congregation, but that it was important for the present to preserve the matter secret; and if they would explain the case to the people, and undertake that he should speedily return, he had no doubt of their cordial concurrence.

On his arrival at Meldorf, the prior of the Black Friars moved the authorities to prevent his preaching. Letters were sent to Nicholas Boyes, threatening heavy penalties if he allowed Zutphen to preach, or to remain in his house. These missives were shown to Zutphen. After reading them carefully, he said: "Forasmuch as he was come, being sent for by the whole congregation, to preach the gospel of Christ, he would satisfy that vocation, because he saw it would be acceptable unto the whole congregation; and that he ought rather to obey the Word of God than man. Also, that if it pleased God that he should lose his life in Dithmarsh, there was as near a way to heaven as in any other place: for that he doubted nothing at all that he must once suffer for the gospel's sake." Zutphen continued to preach, and ultimately suffered martyrdom.

In this spirit of self-denying consecration, humble men went everywhere preaching the Word—knowing that at every step they were liable to imprisonment or death. They were sustained instrumentally by the prayers and sympathies of the

Christian societies spontaneously formed by the brethren who embraced the truth, and who were as willing as their faithful teachers to seal its testimony with their blood. At a later period we find in some of these communities a distinct recognition of Congregational principles. The martyr's testimony for Congregational principles. **AYMOND DE LA VOYE**,* when brought up before the magistrates of Bordeaux in 1543, after nine months' imprisonment, was examined on various points of Christian doctrine. In the course of the inquiry, the following colloquy took place:—

JUDGE.—“Dost thou believe in the Church?”

THE MARTYR.—“I believe, as the Church, regenerated by the blood of Christ, and founded in his Word, hath appointed.”

JUDGE.—“What Church is that?”

THE MARTYR.—“*The Church is a Greek word, signifying as much as a congregation or assembly; and so I say, that whensoever the faithful do congregate together to the honour of God, and the amplifying of Christian religion, the Holy Ghost is verily with them.*”

JUDGE.—“By this it should follow, that there be many Churches; and where any rustical clowns do assemble together, there must be a Church?”

THE MARTYR.—“It is no absurd thing to say that there be many Churches, or Congregations, amongst the Christians; and so speaketh St. Paul: ‘To all the Churches which are in Galatia,’ etc. And yet all these Congregations make but one Church.”

* Foxe.

JUDGE.—“The Church wherein thou believest, is it not the same which our creed doth call ‘the Holy Church’?”

THE MARTYR.—“I believe the same.”

JUDGE.—“And who should be the Head of that Church?”

THE MARTYR.—“Jesus Christ.”

JUDGE.—“And not the Pope?”

THE MARTYR.—“No.”

CHAPTER XVI.

IN the unfailing order of providence the agency required at each successive stage of the Reformation was prepared at the proper season, and specially adapted to the work to be accomplished.

The great service needed at the period now before our attention, was a faithful translation of the Scriptures into the language to be spoken by the millions of the Anglo-Saxon race.

The translation prepared by Wycliffe had lost its adaptation. It contained terms that had become obsolete, and the

Necessity
for an Eng-
lish trans-
lation of
the Bible.

variations of copyists in spelling must have rendered some manuscripts almost unintelligible. The principles of the language were fixed in its grammatical construction, but there was still ample room for improvement. Caxton, who died in 1491, referring to the changes produced in the lapse of the preceding century, says of a work edited by him: "The English was so rude and broad that I could not well understand it; also the Lord Abbot of Westminster did show to me lately certain evidence for to reduce it into our English then used; but it was written in such wise, that it was more like Dutch than English, so that I could not reduce ne bring it to be understooden. And certainly, our language now used, vary-

eth far from that which was spoken when I was born ; for we Englishmen be born under the domination of the moon, which is never steadfast but ever wavering. Common English that is spoken in one shire, varyeth from another."

It was the peculiar honour of WILLIAM TYNDALE to prepare an English translation of the Holy Scriptures, which, for its clearness and force, has remained with few changes, comparatively, for three centuries ; and nearly all that we know of him is in relation to this great work.

He was born about the year 1477, at Hunt's-court, Nibley, a beautiful village at the foot of Stinchcomb Hill, in Gloucestershire. At a very early age he became a student at Oxford ; but, attracted probably by the Greek lectureship and the fame of Erasmus, he removed to Cambridge, and devoted himself to the critical examination of the Greek Testament ; he read to his fellow students in Magdalen Hall and Magdalen College.

On leaving the university, he went to his native county, and engaged himself as chaplain and tutor to the family of Sir John Walsh, at the Manor House of Little Sodbury. On Sundays he preached at the towns and parishes in the neighbourhood, and sometimes gave a sermon at St. Austin's Green, Bristol.

Whilst resident here, the report of Luther's intrepid defiance of the Pope reached England. The Italian priests located in the district, often met at the table of Sir John Walsh, and warmly discussed the exciting topic of the day. On one occasion, a privileged guest in the company said : "We had

better be without God's laws than the Pope's." Tyndale, in the ardour of his zeal, replied: "I defy the Pope, and all his laws; and if God give me life, ere many years the ploughboys shall know more of the Scriptures than you do." After this frank avowal of his convictions, Tyndale was soon branded by the priests as a heretic in sophistry, a heretic in logic, and a heretic in divinity. Feeling that his continuance at the Manor House might cause his patron some trouble or inconvenience, he said to him, "Sir, I perceive I shall not be suffered to tarry long in this country, neither shall you be able, though you would keep me out of the hands of the spirituality, and also what displeasure might grow thereby to you by keeping me, God knoweth, for which, I should be right sorry." His friends, concurring in this view, Tyndale left the neighbourhood. He had been informed that Tonstall, Bishop of London, was a great promoter of classical learning, and that if he could be once fairly established at Fulham, with free access to the library, he might fit himself for his sacred task. He was disappointed in his expectation. "I have more," said the bishop, "than I can well find," (provide for). "Seek in London where you will not lack a service."

Alderman Humphrey Monmouth had kindly given him accommodation; but he could neither understand nor appreciate his noble purpose. "I took him," he says, "into my house half-a-year, and there he lived as a good priest, as methought. He studied most part of the day, and of the night, at his books." Kind as the citizen draper was, Tyndale found no safe place for making his pro-

posed translation. The "divers clothesmen from Suffolk, and other places," would not have disturbed him, but the report of his proceedings in Gloucestershire had reached the Bishop of London, and pursuivants were sent to discover his hiding-place, and bring him up to answer the charges preferred against him "by the priests whom he foiled in argument, and censured for their idleness and intemperance." He had a narrow escape, for he was denounced by name in a bull issued by the Pope. Monmouth, his good-natured benefactor, was sent to prison a few years after, much to his inconvenience, and with some loss to the king's revenue from the suspension of his business; but Tyndale could not be found. Guided by the unseen hand he wandered from place to place until he met with JOHN FRITH,

Frith.

a native of Westerham, in Kent, who had incurred the displeasure of the authorities of the university from the interest he expressed in the doctrines taught by Luther. "Many meetings they had, and great conferences, and by Tyndale the seed of the gospel, and of sincere godliness, was conveyed to the heart of Frith."

In 1524, Tyndale escaped to Hamburg. Alderman Monmouth advanced him ten pounds for the voyage, and afterwards sent from a friend the same sum by Hans Collenbeke, a merchant of the Steelyard. He took with him, also, various books and papers, and amongst them the autograph manuscript of Thorp, containing an account of his examination in the castle of Saltwood, and a copy of Wycliffe's book, both of which he printed at the first opportunity after his

Escape of
Tyndale to
Hamburg,
1524.

arrival on the continent, thus connecting the Reformer of the sixteenth century with the Lollard confessors of the two preceding centuries.

The free city of Hamburg had been an asylum for more than two centuries to the Jews, when driven from England, and amongst them Tyndale found the aid he especially desired in the critical study of Hebrew, to prepare him for the translation of the Old Testament. Alone, detached from all party associations, and compelled to remain in seclusion, he laboured on beneath the eye of his Divine Master until he had completed the translation. The first edition of the New Testa-

ment was printed at Wirtemberg without Tyndale's name, in 1525. In 1526 he was diligently engaged in carrying through the press a quarto edition at Cologne, when the printer was discovered by Cochläus, the bitter antagonist of Luther. Apprized of his danger in time, Tyndale sailed up the Rhine to Worms, taking with him the sheets already printed, and there completed the work. In the spirit of unaffected humility he admits its unavoidable defects. "Them that are learned Christianly," he says, "I beseech, forasmuch as I am sure, and my conscience beareth me record, that of a pure intent singly and faithfully I have interpreted it as far forth as God gave me the gift of knowledge, that the rudeness of the work now at the first time offend thee not; but that they consider how that I had no man to counterfeit, neither was helpen with English of any that had interpreted the same, or such like thing in the Scripture before time." "In time to come (if God have appointed

Printing of
the first
edition of
the English
Testament,
1525, 1526.

us thereunto) we will give it his full shape, and put out if ought be added superfluously, and add to it if ought be overseen through negligence."

It was the steadfast aim of Tyndale to secure for the people sound religious instruction. Under the

Aim of
Tyndale to
instruct the
people.

Romish system, the priests being under no necessity to teach did not trouble themselves to learn. Every stage of spiritual advancement is described, in the New Testament, as the effect of divine truth, accompanied by the influence of the Holy Spirit. We cite the following passages as illustrative examples:

"*Sanctify them through thy truth—thy Word is truth.*"* "Being born again—by the Word of God."†

Sanctifica-
tion by the
truth.

"Grace and peace be multiplied unto you through the knowledge of God and our Lord Jesus Christ."‡ "The Holy Scriptures are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness; that *the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.*"§

In direct opposition to these plain declarations of sacred writ, the Romish Church insists that grace

Sanctifica-
tion by
ceremonies.

to regenerate and to sanctify, is conveyed as a supernatural charm or spiritual medicine, infused by a physical operation into the soul, by the water in baptism, the spittle in chrism, the bread in the mass, and oil at death.

* John xvii. 17.

† 2 Pet. i. 2.

‡ 1 Pet. i. 23.

§ 2 Tim. iii. 15, 16.

"The sacraments," says Moehler, "are represented as channels (*quasi alvei*) whereby the power which flows from the sufferings of Christ, the grace which the Saviour hath merited for us, is individualized and applied to each one; in order that by aid thereof the health of the soul may be re-established, or confirmed."* "As it is by the right use of the sacraments that man is sanctified, so it is by the same means that his sins are forgiven him, or, when these are already forgiven, that sanctifying grace is increased."†

If the people are of necessity instructed at all under such a system, it is only by signs. "As the Lord once," Moehler tells us, "by a mixture of spittle and dust, cured corporeal deafness of a man, so *the same mixture*, applied in baptism, denoteth the fact that the spiritual organs are henceforth opened for the mysteries of God's kingdom; the burning candle signifieth that now truly the divine light from above hath fallen upon the mind, and the darkness of sin been changed into a celestial splendour; the salt denoteth the wise man freed from the folly of this world, the anointing with oil the new priest." All these marvellous effects are said to be produced by the administration of baptism according to the Romish form, and it is maintained that they will certainly follow, even without a word of explanation. All that it is essential, according to this system, for the mediating priest to do, is to see that the water, the oil, the bread, and spittle are duly prepared and rightly applied. The more the credulous people are pleased with the ceremonial service, accompanied

* Moehler Symbolism, i. 287.

† Ibid. i. 311.

with genuflexions, processions, and effective music, the more contented they will remain in the absence of teaching. It was the work of Tyndale to rouse his countrymen from this state of mental stupor.

Whilst the sheets of the New Testament in English were passing through the press, he prepared a
Tyndale's
prologue to
the people. "prologue" to embolden and to direct the people to read the Scriptures in their own tongue. In reply to the objections of the priests, and in particular to the question, "Wilt thou that no man teach another, but that every man take the Scripture and learn by himself?" he says, "Nay, verily, so say I not. Nevertheless, seeing that *ye will not teach*, if any man thirst for the truth, and read the Scripture by himself, desiring God to open the door of knowledge unto him, God for His truth's sake must teach him." When searching the sacred volume with diligence and care, and earnestly praying for the teaching of the Holy Spirit, Tyndale contended that God would fulfil His own promise and lead the enquirer to a knowledge of the law to convince him of sin, and then lead him to faith in Christ for pardon and acceptance with God. Not only so, the sincere and earnest student of the Word of God, he maintained, would find it a sure guide in all the duties and relations of life. As in the acquisition of useful knowledge for the ordinary practical purposes of life, men are gradually led from one step to another,—“so,” continues Tyndale, “it would come to pass that as we know by natural wit what followeth of a true principle of natural reason, even so, by the principles of the faith, and by the plain Scriptures, and by the circumstances of the text,

should we judge all men's exposition, and all men's doctrine, and should receive the best and refuse the worst."

He recommended the priests to study the Scriptures for themselves, and then to adopt some simple method for the careful and gradual instruction of the people.

"But," he adds, in the tone of severe but well-merited rebuke, "now do ye clean contrary; ye drive them from God's Word and will let no man come thereto until he have been two years Master of Art. First, they nosel them in sophistry, and in *benefundatum*, and there corrupt they their judgments with apparent arguments, and with alleging unto them texts of logic, of natural *philautia*, of metaphysic, and moral philosophy, and of all manner of books of Aristotle, and of all manner of doctors which they yet never saw. Moreover, one holdeth this, another holdeth that; one is a Real, another a Nominal. What wonderful dreams have they of their predicaments, universals, second intentions, *quidities*, *hæc scities*, and relatives. And whether *specia fundata in chimera* be *vera species*; and whether this proposition be true, *non ens est aliquid*; whether *ens* be *æquivocum* or *univocum*. *Ens* is a voice only, say some. *Ens* is a *univocum*, saith another, and descendeth into *ens creatum*, and into *ens increatum per modum intrinsecos*, when they have this way brawled eight, ten, or twelve years: and after that their judgments are utterly corrupt; then they begin their divinity; not at the Scripture, but every man taketh a sundry doctor, which doctors are as sundry and as divers, the one contrary unto the other, as there are fashions and monstrous shapes, none like another among our sects of religion. Now there is no other division or heresy in the world save man's wisdom, and when man's foolish wisdom interpreteth Scripture. Man's wisdom scattereth, divideth and maketh sects; while the wisdom of one is that a white coat is best to serve God in, another saith a black, and another gray, another a blue; and while one saith God will hear your prayer in this place, and another saith in that place, and while one saith this place is holier, another that place is holier, and this religion is holier than that, and this saint is greater than that, and a hundred thousand

like things. Man's wisdom is plain idolatry, neither is there any other idolatry than to imagine of God after man's wisdom. God is not man's imagination, but that only which He saith of Himself. Will you resist God? Will ye forbid Him to give his Spirit unto the lay as well as unto you? Hath He not made the English tongue? Why forbid ye Him to speak in the English tongue then as well as in Latin? Finally, that this threatening and forbidding the lay people to read the Scripture is not for love of your souls (which they care for as the fox for the geese), is evident, and clearer than the sun, inasmuch as they permit and suffer you to read Robin Hood, Bevis of Hampton, Hercules, Hector, and Troilus, with a thousand histories and fables of love and wantonness, and of ribaldry, as filthy as heart can think; to corrupt the minds of youth withal clean contrary to the doctrine of Christ and his apostles."*

The labours of Tyndale were not in vain. As soon as the "good seed of the kingdom" was prepared, many hearts were opened for its reception.

English Testaments imported, 1525. In the autumn of 1525, a vessel from Antwerp moored at the Steel-yard on the north bank of the Thames (near the present Blackfriars Bridge), and at dusk a few zealous Christian men came by appointment to receive from it a bale of books, and under cover of advancing night conveyed the treasure to a secret depository in the house of Thomas Garrett, curate of All Hallows, in Honey Lane, a narrow street in Cheapside. Voluntary agents commenced without delay to put the copies of Tyndale's Testament sent to them in this manner into immediate circulation. Many were distributed at midnight, and the interest awakened by them excited the desire for a larger supply. The writings of Tyndale produced in many readers full conviction, and they devoted themselves

* Tyndale's Works, i. 192, *seq.*

assiduously to the service assigned to them. Foxe tells us, for example, that Richard Bayfield, a Benedictine monk, being chamberlain in the abbey of Bury St. Edmunds, became acquainted with two godly men of London, brick-makers, Master Maxwell and Master Stacey, wardens of their company, who were grafted in the doctrine of Jesus Christ, and gave him Tyndale's Testament in English, with a book called the "Wicked Mammon," and the "Obedience of a Christian Man." For reading these works he was imprisoned three quarters of a year. On his liberation Maxwell and Stacey sent him abroad with money, and he became a large purchaser of Tyndale's publications and other works favourable to the Reformation. These efforts of Christian zeal did not escape the notice of the authorities in London. They had already been apprized that attempts would be made to circulate Tyndale's translation. Edward Lee writes to Henry VIII. :—

"Please it, your highness, moreover, to understand that I am certainly informed as I passed in this country, that an Englishman, your subject, *at the solicitation and instance of Luther, with whom he is, hath translated the New Testament into English, and within a few days* ^{Alarm of the bishops.} intendeth to arrive with the same imprinted, in England. I need not to advertise your Grace what infection and danger may ensue hereby if not withstood. This is the next way to fill your realm with Lutherans. For all Luther's perverse opinions be grounded upon bare words of Scripture, not well taken nor understood, which your Grace hath opened in sundry places of your royal book. *All our forefathers, governors of the Church of England, hath with all diligence forbade and eschewed publication of English Bibles, as appeareth in constitutions provincial of the Church of England.* Now, sir, as God hath endued your grace with Christian courage to set forth

the standard against these Philistines, and to vanquish them, so I doubt not but that He will assist your Grace to prosecute and perform the same; that is, to undertread them that they shall not now lift up their head, which they endeavour now by means of English Bibles. They know what such books hath done in your realms in times passed. 'Hidretoo,' blessed be God, your realm is save from infection of Luther's sect. As for so much that, although any peradventure be blotted in, yet for fear of your royal majesty, which hath drawn his sword in God's cause, they dare not openly avow. Wherefore I cannot doubt but that your noble Grace will valiantly maintain what you have so nobly begun."*

Thus premonished, the king wrote to Luther to warn him "that all translations of the Scriptures would be destroyed; with further sharp correction and punishment against the keepers and readers of the same." Tunstall, Bishop of London, in his charge to his clergy, October 24th, 1526, ordered, on pain of excommunication, that all books containing "the translation of the New Testament in the English tongue" should be brought in to the Vicar-General within thirty days. Archbishop Warham, on the 3rd of November in the same year, issued a similar mandate. Sir John Hackett was sent on a special embassy to the Court of the Netherlands to urge the adoption of stringent means to prevent the printing of English Testaments in that country. Letters were also sent to Sir William Gresham, governor of the English merchants at Antwerp, requiring him to exert his influence for the accomplishment of the same object. The burgesses of that free city resisted the attempt, however, as an invasion of their rights, and protected their printer, Christopher Endhoven. Hackett, in a letter to

* Ellis, vol. ii. 3rd ser., Letter cl. ; Cotton MSS. Vespas. ciii. fol. 211.

Wolsey, January, 1527, confessed that his mission was a failure, and recommended that an agent should be commissioned to buy up the New Testament. Warham, acting on this suggestion, employed Packington, who was friendly with Tyndale, to purchase the remainder of the edition he had printed. Warham, pleased with his imaginary success, made a bonfire of his New Testaments. The fund supplied by this transaction was very seasonable, and enabled Tyndale to strike off the fourth edition at the press of Christopher von Raymond. The people sought for the books with greater eagerness. The depository in Honey Lane was not the only source of supply. Foreign merchants found it worth while to procure the precious commodity, notwithstanding the severe penalties threatened against the vendors. Sir Thomas More complained bitterly that, notwithstanding the great cost of producing these books, they were sent over by whole “fattes full at once.”

Wolsey would gladly have interdicted the ships from Antwerp, and closed the ports against them; but a dearth in England at the time compelled him to remove all restraint on the importation of corn, and the New Testaments were often concealed in sacks.

It is a remarkable and very significant circumstance that at this juncture Henry VIII. made a *direct appeal to the people*. Whilst issuing proclamations threatening the severest penalties against all who received or maintained religious opinions contrary to his own, and forbidding them even to think differently from himself, the king nevertheless sent out a

Appeal of
Henry
VIII. to the
people.

printed address, in which he speaks to his subjects in the condescending tone of a friend and adviser, taking them all into his confidence. After giving an account of his personal controversy with Luther, the king says:—

“So came it then to pass, that Luther at last perceiving wise men to espy him, learned men to leave him, good men to abhor him, and his frantic favourers to fall to wrack, the nobles and honest people in Almain, being taught by the proof of his ungracious practice, much more hurt and mischief to follow thereof than ever they looked after, devised a letter, to us written, to abuse them and all other nations, in such wise as ye, by the contents thereof, hereafter shall perceive. In which he feigneth himself to be informed that we be turned to the favour of his sect. And, with many flattering words, he laboureth to have us content that he might be bold to write to us in the matter and cause of the gospel. And thereupon, without answer had from us, not only published the same letter, and put it in print, of purpose that his adherents should be the bolder, under the shadow of our favour; but also *fell in device with one or two lewd persons, born in this our realm, for the translating the New Testament into English*, as well with many corruptions of that holy text, as certain prefaces and other pestilent glories in the margins, for the advancement and setting forth of his abominable heresies, intending to abuse the *good minds and devotion that you, our dearly beloved people, bear toward the Holy Scripture*, and infect you with the deadly corruption and contagious odour of his pestilent errors. In the avoiding whereof, we, of our *special tender zeal towards you*, have, with the deliberate advice of the most reverend father in God, Thomas, Lord Cardinal, Legate de Latere of the See Apostolic, Archbishop of York, Primate, and our chancellor of this realm, and other reverend fathers of the Spirituality, determined the said and untrue translation to be burned, with further sharp correction and punishment against the keepers and readers of the same, *reckoning of your wisdoms very sure that ye will well and thankfully perceive our tender and loving mind toward you therein*, and that ye will never be so greedy upon sweet wine, be the grape never so pleasant, that ye will desire to taste it; being well advertised that your enemy

before hath poisoned it. . . . *We, therefore, our well-beloved people, not willing you, by such subtle means, to be deceived or seduced, have, of our especial favour toward you, translated for you, and given out unto you, as well his (Luther's) letter written to us, as our answer also made unto the same. By the sight whereof ye may partly perceive, both what the man is in himself, and of what sort is his doctrine. And if you do (as I trust verily ye will) not descant upon Scripture, nor trust too much your own comments and interpretations; but, in every doubt that shall in 'source,' learn the truth, and incline to the same by the advice of your pastoral fathers of the soul, it shall not only encourage well-learned men to set forth and translate into our mother tongue many good things and virtuous, which, for fear of wrong taking, they dare not yet do; but also that ye, by the good use thereof, shall take much good, and great spiritual profit; which thing, in you perceived, shall give occasion that such holy things, as evil-disposed persons, by false and erroneous translations corrupted, deliver you to your imminent peril and destruction, good men and well learned may be 'percase' in time coming the bolder, truly and faithfully translated, substantially viewed and corrected by sufficient authority, to put it in your hands, to your inward solace and ghostly comfort, to the full extirpation of all seditious errors, increase of your devotion and charitable faith to God, establishment of God's grace and favour towards you, and thereby good works with your diligent endeavour more plentifully springing in you, your sins remitted and forgiven you by his mercy: ye shall not only in heaven attain those inestimable rewards that your merits cannot of their own nature, but of his liberal goodness, with virtue of His passion, deserve, but also by your good prayers and intercessions, living virtuously in the laws of God and this realm, cause sooner universal peace in Christendom to ensue and follow, which in earth should be most desired of all true Christian men next after heaven, to which place of joy our Lord send me with you, where I had 'lever' be your servant than here your king. Valete."*

The people, heedless of this royal admonition, continued to buy the Testaments. We learn, from the depositions of persons brought up for examination, how widely they were disseminated. Mr. Fyshe,

of Whitefriars, said he received Testaments of Harman, a Dutchman, who offered him three hundred at "ninepence a-piece." Robert Necton, brother of the sheriff of Norwich, procured from Fyshe a copy, which he had read with so much interest that he was induced to apply for more, "sometimes to the number of twenty or thirty in the great volume." He sold "five copies to Sir William Furboshore, singing man in Suffolk; two in Bury; two at Pycknam-Wade in Norfolk; one to a priest; and another to Gibson, a merchantman." Vicar Constantine was another diligent colporteur. He took sixteen New Testaments to Lynn, and in other places found purchasers. Country people came to Friar Barnes, in his chamber at Austin Friars, London, "to ask his counsel in the New Testament," and to obtain copies. John Tyball, who walked with his friend John Hilles one morning at Michaelmas, 1526, from Bumstead, in Essex, told him that Sir Richard Fox, their curate, was "well entered in their learning;" and that they thought to "get hym hole in shorte space." Friar Barnes, at their request, wrote a letter to Sir Richard, which he read "openly before them." Sir Thomas More says that information was laid against R. Webbe, of Bristol, "that some of these pestylent bookes were throwen in the strete, and lefte at menny's dores by nyght, that where they durste not offer theyr poyson to sell, they wolde of theyr che-ryte poyson men for nought." *

A strict visitation was commenced in the summer of 1527, by Dr. Wharton, vicar-general, which

* Confutation, p. 2, p. 408.

revealed the existence of many small societies of devout persons, recognized by each other as "*Brothers in Christ*," or "Known men." Old Father Hacker, or Ebbe, a man of uncommon activity, occupied himself as a Scripture-reader among them, from 1521, for about six years. "Thomas Philip, point (lace) maker, against the Little Conduit in Cheap," is also described as a "chief reader and teacher." These humble evangelists met for five or six years at the house of William Russell, tailor, at the gate of Bird's Alley, against St. Stephen's Church in Coleman Street, "for conversation, reading, and teaching." Several other stations are mentioned, at which they met for the same purpose, in various parts of the City. So "infected" was London supposed to be with their opinions, that Sir Sebastian Harris, curate of Kennington, when charged with having the New Testament and another book, was bound not to approach the City within four miles, for the space of two years. This ecclesiastical cordon was soon found to be far too limited for its object. On further inquiry, it was discovered that Essex and the Eastern Counties were quite as much under the influence of the contagion. Sir Sebastian was ordered, therefore, not to speak to any persons suspected of heresy, or to favour them.

Father Hacker visited Tyball, the churchwarden of Bumstead, four years, and they communed together. He "fell in hand" with Sir William Stryngar and the priests of the parish, and reasoned with them out of the Scriptures, for he thought that if "he might bring a priest once to his learning, he

"Known
Men."
"Brothers
in Christ."

were sure and strong enough." He failed in this instance, but with Sir Richard Fox he had more encouraging success. William Pykas and John Girlyng, the Beckwiths of Bocking and of Braintree, and many others, were active in diffusing the knowledge they had received from the Scriptures. Sir Richard Fox, accompanied by one or two of the brethren, made a short excursion to visit them at their respective abodes, and read to them one of "Powle's Epistles," or out of "Wycliffe's Wicket," a book he carried about with him. Master Maxwell and Master Stacey "were grafted in the doctrine of Jesus Christ; and, through their godly conversation of life, converted many men and women, both in London and in the country, and *once a year, of their own cost, went about to visit the brethren and sistern scattered abroad.*"

The circulation of religious books with copies of Tyndale's Testament, seems to have been promoted by an organized society supported by voluntary contributions. This interesting fact we learn from a communication made by Sebastian Newdygate to Mr. Denney:—

"Sebastian Newdygate hath received of certain persons divers books, of the which two be against the Sacrament of the Altar (the Mass). Item, yt one Thomas Keyle, mercer, of London, shewed me yt there was made for the augmentation of Christian brethren of this sort, auditors and clerks within this city; *and that every Christian brother of their sort should pay a certain sum of money to the aforesaid clerks which should go into all quarters of this realm, and at certain times the auditors to take accompt of them.*"

"And then I asked him how he and his fellows

would do, seeing the king's Grace and these great lords of the realm were against them?—the which said that they had already two thousand books out against the blessed Sacrament (the Mass) in the *commons' hands*, with books concerning divers other matters; *affirming that if it were once in the commons' hands they would have no further care.*"* So assured were they of the power of the truth—that if once disseminated amongst the people, it must ultimately prevail.

On the other side a subscription was made to reimburse Warham for the loss he had incurred in buying up the New Testaments. This "gracious and blessed deed cost him sixteen pounds nine shillings and threepence." He said that it was "not reason that the holle charge" should rest upon him. The Bishop of Norwich, June 24th, 1527, sent him ten marks, and offered to give more if necessary.

Subscription to reimburse the Archbishop.

To the dismay of the bishops the light began to spread in the universities, and in particular in the new college of St. Friedswide, founded by Cardinal Wolsey. The movements in Oxford of Mr. Garrett, curate of Honey Lane, caused great commotion and alarm. He was Fellow of Magdalen College, and in 1526 took with him for the use of the students a supply of the first translation of the New Testament by Tyndale, with other books. A curious original correspondence is still in existence, giving a circumstantial account of every step of his course. On his arrival at Oxford "he sought out all such as were given to Greek, Hebrew, and the polite Latin tongue, and brought

Light in the universities.

* R. O. MSS.

books of new things to allure them, and secretly distributed them amongst his acquaintances in sundry colleges and halls." He was invited to Oxford by Mr. Clark, "who had read in his chamber Paul's Epistles to young men, and such as were of two, three, or four years' continuance in the university—the most towardly young man in Oxford.'"

The books were obtained from "a bookseller in London, called Gough," and were "hid under the earth, and then conveyed from place to place." A poor scholar in the monastery of Reading, confessed that he had sent to the Prior threescore or more, and other monasteries were supposed to be "infected with them."

Wolsey took measures for the capture of Garrett. Doctor London relates the adventure of his apprehension and escape. He was taken in the house of one Radley, by the commissary, "who kept him secret in his own chamber, willing next morning to send him to Wolsey; but as Mr. Commissary was at evensong, Mr. Garrett picked the lock of Mr. Commissary's door, went immediately to Gloucester College, and without delay took a secular scholar's coat, and went away with all speed he might."

Measures
for the
capture of
Garrett,
1528.

"We have this Monday," Dr. London continues, "searched Radley, his house, and some books Mr. Garrett hath there left behind him, and some I had at a bookbinder's, and certain other books we had of the scholar which did lend to Mr. Garrett his coat. Mr. Garrett hath distributed many other books to divers scholars, which books we have all in hand, and be in surety of the scholars. All is done as secretly as we possibly may do in avoiding slander, and if the matter be not followed while it is fresh the infect persons will flee and convey their books. One

of these scholars is named John Mayow, whom we got this night after the sun was down. He had in his chest the table (catalogue) which in the next leaf I have written in every name as it is written with the scholar's own hand.

"After this Mr. Garrett escaped. The commissary, being in extreme pensiveness, knew of no other remedy but this extraordinary: and caused a figure to be made by one expert in astronomy: and his judgment doth continually persist upon this that he fled in a tawny coat south-eastward, and is in the middle of London, and will shortly to the seaside."* Oxford, 24th Feb., 1528.

The astrologist consulted by the "pensive" commissary was at fault. Instead of going south-eastward the fugitive made towards the west. John Fooke, Vicar of All Saints, Bristol, reported his arrest in a strain of exultation beginning in this manner:—

Apprehended at Bristol.

"*Bristolli raptim primo die Marcii post vespas.* Pleaseth it you to understand that the diligence and effectuous means of Mr. Wilkins, chapman of Bristol, father-in-law of one of your proctors, Master Garrarde, was taken in a little town called Bedeminster, a mile from Bristol, the last night before this, upon suspicion of heresy. He is committed to the common gaol of Somersetshire, called Ilchester. There was such wait privily laid that he could not escape by no passage over the water within fifteen miles of Bristol. He came to Bristol the day before the making hereof at afternoon, and tarried not in the town, for by likelihood he heard of the privy search. Mr. Wilkins caused Mr. Mayor, of Bristol, with the aldermen, and twenty more of the council, to keep the privy watch, at which were very diligent all at Mr. Wilkins's instance."†

As might be expected, the authorities were now supremely happy. The Bishop of Lincoln writes from Holborn the 5th day of March to Wolsey:—

"Pleaseth it your good Grace to understand that the wicked Master Garrett which escaped from Oxon is now taken. The commissary 'made great diligent search for his taking at Dover,

* R. O. MSS.

† Ibid.

Rye, Winchester, Hampton, Chester, and Bristol.' 'Master Freer was taken yesterday at the Blackfriars, London.' 'This Garrett, Clark, and Freer are three perilous men, and have been the occasion of corrupting of this youth. They have done much mischief, and for the love of God let them be handled thereafter. For I fear me sore they will infect many other parts of England. I beseech your grace let not the prior of Reading and his book be forgotten, but that while your grace is now at Winchester it will like you to send there some of your discreet chaplains for the ordering of that matter, and that the said prior may be put in safe custody within the said monastery till your further pleasure be known.'*

The students suspected of reading the prohibited books were examined—John Frith, John Clark, Henry Sumner, William Betts, Richard Traverner, Richard Cox, Michael Drumm, Godfrey Harman, Thomas Lawney, Radley, and others of Frieswide; Diot, Udal, and others of Corpus Christi; Eden of Magdalen; Goodman, William Bayley, Robert Ferrer, and John Salisbury of Gloucester, Bernard and St. Mary's Colleges; Langport, a monk of St. Austin's of Canterbury; and Anthony Delaber, of St. Alban's Hall; were thrown into a loathsome cellar used for salt fish. They were brought up in succession for trial, and with the exception of Betts and Traverner, were sentenced to death. Afterwards they were led to the stake to see their books burned before them, and then reconducted to their cells, where four soon after died. The rest escaped, and amongst their number was John Frith, who fled to the continent and joined Tyndale about September, 1526. Garrett recanted, but afterwards suffered martyrdom.

At Cambridge the attention of several students had been directed to the Scriptures ten years before,

* R. O. MSS.

by Stafford the reader of divinity in Pembroke Hall. The conversion of Thomas Bilney and of Miles Coverdale led to an interesting preaching ^{Cambridge} movement, and to a meeting for con- ^{students.}ference, and the examination of the sacred volume, at a house called the White Horse.

Nothing is more remarkable in connection with the progress of the Reformation in England, than the secret and extensive demand in the universities for the entire literature of the Reformers, from the time of Marsilius to the last treatise issued from the continental press. In the list of books found in the possession of students and others, we find a complete catalogue of the works written on the questions so earnestly discussed.

In the articles against Bayfield, it is said: "Thou hast brought over, from parts beyond the sea, a great number of books, both in Latin and English into this realm of England, and especially to our city and diocese of London, and hast procured them to be brought and conveyed over: also thou hast kept by thee, and studied those books, and hast published and read them over unto divers men, and many of these books also hast dispersed, and given unto divers persons dwelling within our city and diocese of London."

The *mind* of England was becoming silently, and yet thoroughly indoctrinated. The leading representatives of the Church of Rome began to see that besides the burning of books, and the continual threatening and inflictions of pains and penalties, it was high time that some effort should be made, by argument, to meet their active and learned opponents.

Tonstal, in 1528, made an earnest and special appeal to Sir Thomas More. The Catholic Church, he said, was in danger :—

“As you then, beloved brother, can play the Demosthenes, both in this our English tongue, and also in the Latin, and have always accustomed to be an earnest defender of the truth in all assaults, you can never bestow your spare hours better (if ye can steal any from your weighty affairs), than to set forth something in our tongue to declare unto the rude and simple people, the crafty malice of the heretics, and to make us the more prompt against these wicked supplanters of the Church.” “Therefore, boldly go through and set upon this holy work, whereby ye shall profit the Church of God, and get yourself an immortal name, and eternally glory in heaven. Which thing that you will, do, and help the Church with your defence, we earnestly desire you in the Lord, and to this end we grant you licence to have and read the same books.”*

Thus summoned as the champion of the Church, he entered the conflict. We have the result in his voluminous dialogues written in reply to the works of Tyndale and Frith.

The learned chancellor, to make the controversy agreeable, invites us into his study, and to sit down at a “littel tabel.” Before the opening of the discussion, we may glance at the man himself. He is somewhat below the middle stature, of fair complexion, a slight bloom on his cheeks, yet not pale. His hair is dark brown, inclining to black, his beard thin, and those speckled grey eyes are very expressive. His voice is penetrating and clear, though not musical. He tells us that he has warned his servants, “that if any other sholde happen to desire to speak with me, (certaine

More at his
“littel
tabel.”

* Wilkins, iii. 712.

except of whom I gave them knowledge,) thei sholde differre them till another seassone." Before him is a "messenger," with whom he proposes to hold a "dialogue" on "many thinges touchyng the pestilent sect of Luther and Tyndale, by the tone bygone in Saxony, and by the tother laboured to be brought into England." The colloquy is extremely long, and we must content ourselves with listening to a few words on the views of Tyndale:—

MORE.—"'Tyndale has corrupted and changed the New Testament from the good and wholesome doctrine of Christ, to the devilish heresies of their own, that it was clear a different thing.'

MESSENGER.—"'That is a marvel that it should be clean contrary; for to them that read it, it seemed very like.'

MORE.—"'It is, nevertheless, contrary, and yet the more perilous.'

MESSENGER.—"'Why, what faults are there in it?'

MORE.—"'To tell you all, that were in a manner to rehearse the whole book.'

MESSENGER.—"'I would hear some one.'

MORE.—"'He hath translated three words of great weight.'

MESSENGER.—"'All that may well be; but that was not well done. But, I pray you, what words be they?'

MORE.—"'The one, is the word Priests; the other, the Church; the third, Charity. For Priests wheresoever he speaketh of the priests, but always seniors. *The Church he always calleth the Congregation*, and charity he calleth love. Now do these names in our English tongue, neither express the things that he meant by them; and also there appeareth the circumstances well considered, that he had a mischievous mind in the change. For first, as for priests and priesthood, though that of old they used commonly to chose well elderly men to be priests, and, therefore, in the Greek tongue, priests were called presbutri, as we might say, elder men; yet were not all priests chosen old, as appeareth by St. Paul writing to Timotheus, *Nemo juventutem tuam contemnat*—let no man contemn thy youth; nor every elder man is a priest. And in our English tongue, "senior"

signifieth nothing at all, but is a French word used in English, more than half in mockery—when we call another my lord in scorn. And if he mean to take the Latin word senior, that word in the Latin tongue never signifieth a priest, but only an elderman. By which name of elderman, if he would call the priests Englishly, then should he rather signify their age than their office; and yet the name doth in English plainly signify the Aldermen of the cities, and nothing the priests of the Church. And this may we perceive, that rather than he would call a priest by the name of a priest, he would seek a new word; he neither wished nor cared what. Now where he calleth the Church alway the congregation, what reason had he therein? For every man well seeth, that though Church be indeed a congregation, yet is not every congregation the Church, but a congregation of Christian people, which congregation of Christian people hath been in England always called, and known by the name Church, which name what good cause or colour could he find to turn into the name of congregation?"

There is no seat in the study of Sir Thomas More for Tyndale. We must turn to his own writings if we would hear him answer for himself:—

“With respect to the interpretation of this Greek word *presbyteros*, by this word senior,” Tyndale replies: “M. More is captious. Of a truth senior is no very good English, though senior and junior be used in the universities; but there came no better in my mind at that time. Howbeit, I spied my fault since, long ere M. More told it me, and I have mended it in all the works which I have since made, and call it an elder; and in that he maketh heresy of it to call *presbyteros* an elder, he condemneth their own Latin text of heresy also, which they use daily in the Church, and have used, I supposed, this fourteen hundred years.” Tyndale cites the passages and comments upon them at considerable length. “Hereof,” he continues, “ye see that I have no more erred than their own text, which they have used since the Scripture was first in the Latin tongue, and that their own text understandeth by *presbyteros* nothing more, save an elder. And they were called elders, because of their age, gravity, and sadness, as thou mayest see by the text, and bishops or overseers, by the

reason of their offices. When he layeth Timothy unto my charge, now he was young, then he weeneth that he had won his golden spurs. But I would pray him to show where he readeth that Paul calleth him *presbyteros*, priest or elder. I durst not then, call him *episcopus* properly, for those overseers which we now call *bishops*, after the Greek word, were *always biding in one place to govern the congregation there.*"

"In the translation of the New Testament, where I found this word *ecclesia*, I interpreted it by this word *congregation*. Even, therefore, did I it, and not of any mischievous mind or purpose to establish heresy, as Master More untruly reporteth of me in his dialogue, where he railleth on the translation of the New Testament. And when M. More saith that this word church is known well enough, I report me unto all the consciences of all the land whether the lay people understand by Church the whole multitude of all that profess Christ, or the juggling spirits only. And when he saith that congregation is a more general term, if it were, it hurteth not. For the circumstance doth ever tell what congregation is meant. Nevertheless, yet saith he not the truth. *For wheresoever I may say a congregation, there may I say a church also.*

"M. More must grant (if he will have *ecclesia* translated throughout all the New Testament by this word church) that church is as common as *ecclesia*. Now is *ecclesia* a Greek word, and was in use before the time of the apostles, and taken for a congregation among the heathen, where was no congregation of God or of Christ. And also Lucas himself useth *ecclesia* for a church or congregation of heathen people. Thrice in one chapter, even in the nineteenth of the Acts, where Demetrius the goldsmith, or silversmith, has gathered a company against Paul for preaching against images. But how happeneth that M. More hath not contended in likewise against his darling Erasmus all this long while? Doth he not change this word *ecclesia* into congregation, and that not seldom in the New Testament?

Tyndale carried the question much further in the consideration of the real nature of the Christian Church. He clearly distinguished between the ecclesiastical form and that which gives to the Church of Christ its essential character.

The Church consists of Christian believers, but a distinction is to be made between a mere historical faith and that which is of the heart. Tyn-
Church of
sincere
believers.dale showed that the gospel might be so preached as to produce a general conviction of its truth, and a disposition to acknowledge one true and living God; but without the renewal of the heart the zeal of such believers would only manifest itself in formalism, pharisaic pride, and the contempt of others. They will follow only their own imagination, "one will serve God in white, and another in black, another in grey, and another in pied. They believe that there is a God, but as they cannot love His laws, so they have no power to believe in Him. But they put their trust and confidence in their own works, and by their own works they will be saved." But in those who belong to the "little flock" there is a spirit totally different. They are led to mourn in repentance for sin, and to find comfort only in the Testament of Christ's blood. They seek continually a deeper repentance and evince a growing desire to know more of Christ and to be like Him. They seek not their own glory. The law of God is written in their hearts, so that were there no law to compel, they would yet naturally, out of their own hearts, keep the laws of God, and against violence compelling to the contrary.

In departing from the truth in doctrine and simplicity of worship, the Church had sunk into the most besotted ignorance and vain ceremonialism:—

"Because Christ had instituted the sacrament of his body and blood to keep us in remembrance of his body breaking, and blood shedding for our sins, therefore went they and set up this

fashion of the mass, and ordained sacraments in the ornaments thereof to signify and express all the rest of his passion. The amice on the head is the kerchief that Christ was blindfolded with when the soldiers buffeted Him and mocked Him, saying, 'Prophecy unto us who smote Thee?' But now it may well signify that he that putteth it on is blinded, and hath professed to lead us after him in darkness, according unto the beginning of his play. And the flap thereon is the crown of thorns. And the alb is the white garment that Herod put on Him, saying, 'He was a fool because He held his peace and would not answer him.' And the two flaps on the sleeves, and the other two on the alb beneath over against his feet behind and before, are the four nails. And the fanon on his hand, the cord that his hands were bound with; and the stole, the rope wherewith He was bound unto the pillar, when He was scourged; and the corporis-cloth, the sindon wherein He was buried; and the altar is the cross, or haply the grave, and so forth. And the casting forth of his hands, the splaying of Christ upon the cross. And the light and sticking up of candles, and bearing of candles or tapers in procession haply signifieth this text (Matt. v.), 'Ye be the light of the world, and let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.' And the salt signifieth the wisdom of Christ's doctrine and that we should herewith salt our deeds, and do nothing without the authority of God's Word. So that in one thing or other, what in the garments, and what in the gestures, all is played, in so much that before he will go to mass, he will be sure to sell him, lest the part of Judas be left out.

"I impute this, our grievous fall into so extreme and horrible blindness, wherein we are so deep and deadly brought asleep, unto nothing so much as unto the multitude of ceremonies." The prelates seeking to amuse the people ceased to give them instruction. "Within the last thirty years the priests," he says, "raged in every pulpit against Greek, Latin, and Hebrew, 'beating the pulpit with their fists for madness.' The people, bent on mere ceremonial performance, became ignorant, insensible, and vain."

So thorough and decided was the Reformation sought by this enlightened and conscientious Re-

former, he sought to restore moral stamina to society, and to lay deep and strong foundations for the future greatness of his country.

The origin of the ecclesiastical millinery referred to by Tyndale, has been shown, with great classical learning, by Mr. Marriott, in his "*Vestiarum Chistianum*." The ecclesiastical *Chasuble*, he tells us, was worn by poor people, of millinery. a similar class with our farm-labourers, who wear the vestment called the round frock, or, more vulgarly, the "smock." St. Augustine employs the term *Casula*, in speaking of the out-door garment on a journeyman tailor at Hippo.*

The *Alb* was a white, common working dress, something like a "large blanket or Highland plaid."†

The *Stole* seems to have originated with the "pocket-handkerchief" used for wiping perspiration from the face—an article of convenience that monks were not allowed to use.‡

The most sensible document cited by Mr. Marriott is a letter of Celestine, Bishop of Rome (A.D. 423—432), addressed to all the bishops of the provinces of Vienne and Narbonne, in which he deplores the folly and childishness of those who introduced these articles of classical dress, as if they were habiliments of particular sanctity. "By dressing in a *pallium*, and wearing a girdle," says the Bishop, "they think to fulfil the truth of Scripture, not in the spirit, but in the letter. But if the precepts to which they refer were for this end, given that after this strange manner they should be observed, why are not the precepts which follow observed in like manner? And so 'burning lights,' held in the hands, as well as a staff? We should be distinguished from the common folks, and from the rest, by our learning—not by our garments; by our mode of life, not by what we wear; by purity of thought, not by peculiarities of dress. For if we begin to affect innovations, we shall tread under foot the traditions of our fathers, only to make room for worthless superstitions. We ought not, therefore, to attract to objects such as these the untrained minds of the faithful. *It is teaching they require, not mockeries like these.* Nor is it *an imposing appearance to the eye* that is needed, but *precepts to be instilled into the mind.*" §

* De Civit Dei, lib. xxii. cap. 8.

† Marriott, Introd. p. viii.

‡ Council Aurelian, canon xx.

§ Marriott, pp. 45, 46.

CHAPTER XVII.

THE conditions under which Tyndale rendered unequalled service to his countrymen in relation to Christianity, are worthy of special attention. He stood alone. With the exception of his young companion, the martyr Frith, he seems to have been completely isolated. An exile, suffering often extreme privation, and in continual jeopardy of his life, we can find no certain proof that he found either sympathy or co-operation from the continental Reformers. His name does not appear in the voluminous correspondence of Luther or Melancthon, and though Cochlaeus and Lee speak of him as associated with Luther at Wittenburg, no trace remains of any personal conference or communication with him. Though Tyndale must have been an active correspondent, we can find none of his autograph letters. He seems to have been detached from all his contemporaries in the work of reformation; yet this could not arise from any coldness of manner or self-absorption. We have abundant proof to the contrary in the glow of fraternal affection that pervades his epistles to his suffering Christian brethren in England. How are we to account for this preterition of Tyndale on the part

of the great leaders of the Reformation? Were they envious of the position he occupied as the English translator of the Scriptures? Were they offended with his fidelity to the truth, and his inflexible adherence to the principles derived from the Word of God? There is no evidence that they entertained any jealous or unfriendly feeling. If they had cherished any kind of resentment, it would have found expression in their writings. We can imagine no reason for their silence, except this—that Tyndale advanced in a line so direct, he was so transparent, and kept so free from all accommodation and compromise, that they could not act in unison with him. They were so entangled in their alliance with princes, and committed to so many schemes, involving a partial surrender, at least, of the truth they professed to maintain, that it was impossible for them to adopt the *role* of the English reformers. For the same reason, namely, the peculiar nature of the work he was called to accomplish, we see that in order to “uncorruptness” it was necessary that he should be kept “apart.” Some of the worst temptations to the witnesses for neglected and forgotten principles at a critical juncture of affairs may come from the “best of men,” and the more genial and yielding in natural disposition the greater may be the danger of the betrayal of their sacred and momentous trust. Tyndale, therefore, was secluded by the hand of God, as Moses in Horeb, as Elijah in the wilderness, and as John in the Isle of Patmos, “for the Word of God, for the testimony of Jesus Christ.”

We return to his controversy with More. “Tyndale’s heresies,” he said, “far exceed, and pass, and in-

comparably offend the majesty of our Lord God than all the setting of Bel and Baal, and Beelzebub, and all the devils in hell." "Burn up his books and the abettors of them with them."

Violence of More.

"Heresy," replied Tyndale, "springeth not of the Scripture, no more than darkness of the sun; but it is a dark cloud that springeth out of the bland hearts of hypocrites, and covereth the face of the Scriptures, and blindeth their eyes that they cannot behold the bright beams of Scripture."

Tyndale prepared to suffer, but he tried to obtain a respite, in which he might prosecute his work of translation. More lost no opportunity by which he might gain information that would lead to his arrest.

In the examinations of persons accused of heresy, especially such as had come from Search for Tyndale.

Flanders or Germany, he questioned them minutely as to their knowledge of Tyndale, and in this way obtained a description of his person, dress, habits, friends, and places of resort. Wolsey sent into the commercial cities of the continent numerous spies to track his steps, and to discover his abettors. A special envoy was directed to obtain authority from the Emperor (Charles V.) for their apprehension and extradition. In the treaty between Francis I. and Charles V., signed August 5, 1529, a clause was inserted with the same object in view; but neither Tyndale nor Frith could be found, though the search had been continued for more than a year. One of the emissaries of the cardinal, in a letter, dated Cologne, October 7, 1528, writes:—

"The letters of your Grace were sent to me from Cologne to Frankfort, respecting the buying up, everywhere, books printed

in the English language, and the apprehension of Roye" (a troublesome assistant of Tyndale), "and Hutchyns (Tyndale), but neither they nor their accomplices have been seen at the fairs of Frankfort since Easter, nor has their printer, Schott, of Strasburg, confessed that he knows where they have vanished. Since receiving your commands, I have spared neither my person, money, nor diligence. By using a licence formerly obtained from the Emperor, and by gifts and presents, I have gained over the Frankfort consuls, and some senators and judges, so that in three or four places I was enabled to collect and pack up all the books. The printed books are still in my possession, except two copies, which I gave to your diligent and faithful agent John West, for the use of the king's grace and yours. If I had not found these books and interfered, they would have been pressed together in paper packages, and enclosed in ten sacks, craftily covered over with flax, and thus unsuspected they would have been sent across the seas, and would have been sent into Scotland and England, and would have been carried away or sold. I shall also take most diligent care as to the foresaid Roye and Hutchyns, both as to apprehending them and detecting the places they frequent."

Hackett reports with great satisfaction "fro Brussels, 27th day of October, 1529," that the New Testaments are to be suppressed:—

"The 22nd day of this month there is a publicacion doen in the Emperor's name through all this country of Brabant, that all the New Testaments translated in French, Douth, or Inghys, shall be brought to the justice hands, to be *bournyth*, within the 25th day of November next coming, upon great payns every man for him, and that from henceforward is commanded no more such eretyk bookes to be written, copied, or imprimyth, ne reddyth, nether kept public, nether secretly, upon like payns; and if there be any man that sustenys heresy, he shall be justyseyth with the sword; and if any woman be fauty, to be quick bride, cast, and couched in a pit under the gerde; and that if there be any man found that has been aforetime aqwyisth and pardont, that tornys again to his errors, he shall be bourned without any further delay: with many other good articles contenyng in the said

New Testaments
burnt by
order of the
Emperor.

publication, right convenient for the exaltation and increase of the holy Catholic faith, and for the extirpation and anychyllacion of the false heretics' intentions and opinions." *

Not to be outdone by the Emperor, Henry VIII., from the "incomparable zeal" he had "to Christ's religion and faith," and from his "singular love and affect for all his good subjects, issued a decree equally severe against all who should "presume to preach, teach, or inform anything openly or privily, or compile and write any book, or hold, exercise, or keep any assemblies or schools in any manner of wise, contrary to the Catholic faith or determination of Holy Church."

Decree of
Henry
VIII.
against
reading and
teaching.

In view of such royal commands or threatenings many might hesitate as to the course of duty. Tyndale, alive to their weakness and danger, addressed to them the most impressive admonition and affectionate counsel:—

"It is right that we obey father and mother, master, lord, prince, and king, and all the ordinances of the worldly, bodily, and ghostly, by which God ruleth us, and ministereth freely his benefits unto us all; and that we love them for the benefits that we receive by them, and fear them for the power they have over us to punish us, if we trespass the law and good order. So far yet are the worldly powers or rulers to be obeyed only, as their commandments repugn not against the commandments of God: and then. Ho! (Halt.)

Christian
people
fortified by
Tyndale.

"Wherefore we must have God's commandments even in our hearts, and by the HIGHER LAW interpret the inferior; that we obey nothing against the belief of our God, or against the faith, hope, and trust that is in Him only, or against the love of God whereby we do or leave undone all things for his sake; and that we do nothing for any man's commandment, against the reverence

* State Papers, vol. vii. p. 210; Henry VIII.

of the name of God, to make it despised, and the less feared and set by: and that we obey nothing to the hindrance of the knowledge of the blessed doctrine of God, whose servant the holy day is. Notwithstanding, though the rulers which God hath set over us command us against God, or do us open wrong, and oppress us with cruel tyranny; yet because they are in God's room, we may not avenge ourselves, but by the process and order of God's law, and laws of man made by the authority of God's law, which is also God's law, even by a higher power and remitting vengeance unto God, and in the mean season suffer until the hour be come."

In 1530 Tyndale visited Hamburg. On his way he suffered shipwreck, and lost his books and papers.

Tyndale at Hamburg, 1530. The pestilence was raging in the city at the time of his arrival, but forgetting all danger in the ardour of his zeal, he resumed his work with untiring energy. Vaughan, the English ambassador, at length came upon his track. "I am informed," he writes to Henry VIII., "that Frith is lately married in Holland, but in what place I cannot tell. This marriage may by chance hinder my persuasion. I suppose him to have been thereunto driven through poverty, which is to be pitied, and his qualities considered." With respect to Tyndale, Vaughan says, in a letter dated, "Barrough, near Antwerp, January 26th, 1530":—

"I have written three sundry letters unto William Tyndale, and the same sent for the more surety to three several places to Frankfort, Hamburg, and Marlborough (Marburg). Other parties, he tells the king, have entered into correspondence with Tyndale, and he encloses the communications sent in reply. In a more confidential note to Lord Cromwell, Vaughan adds: 'It is unlikely to get Tyndale into England, where he daily heareth so many things which feareth him. After his book answering my Lord Chancellor's book be put forth, I think he will write no more. The man is of a greater knowledge than the king's

highness doth take him for, which well appeareth by his works. Would God he were in England."

The opportunity of meeting the magnanimous and devoted Reformer, so long sought by the British resident, was afforded unexpectedly and under circumstances of most touching interest. Vaughan himself shall relate the story. He writes (Antwerp, the 18th of April);—

"Tyndale sent a certain person to seek me, whom he had advised to say that a certain friend of mine, unknown to the messenger, was very desirous to speak with me. Then I said to the messenger, 'What is your friend, and where is he?' 'His name I know not,' said he; 'but if it be your pleasure to go where he is, I will be glad thither to bring you.' Thus doubtful what this matter meant, I concluded to go with him, and followed him till he brought me without the gates of Antwerp, into a field lying near the same, where was abiding the said Tyndale. At our meeting, 'Do you not know me?' said this Tyndale. 'I do not well remember you,' said I to him. 'My name,' said he, 'is Tyndale.' 'But, Tyndale,' said I, 'fortunate be our meeting.' Then, Tyndale, 'Sir, I have been exceedingly desirous to speak with you.' 'And I with you, what is your mind?' 'Sir,' said he, 'I am informed that the king's grace taketh great displeasure with me for putting forth of certain books, which I lately made in these parts; but especially for the book named the "Practice of Prelates;" whereof I have no little marvel, considering that in it I did but warn his Grace of the subtle demeanour of the clergy of his realm towards his person, and of the shameful abusions by them practised, not a little threatening the displeasure of his Grace and weal of his realm; in which doing I showed and declared the heart of a true subject, which sought the safeguard of his royal person and weal of his commons, to the intent that his Grace hereof warned, might in due time prepare his remedy against their subtle dreams. *If it be for my pains therein taken, if for my poverty, if for mine exile out of my natural country, and bitter absence from my friends, if for my hunger, my thirst, my cold, the great danger wherewith I am everywhere compassed; and,*

*finally, if for innumerable other hard and sharp fightings which I endure, not yet feeling their asperity, by reason I hoped with my labours to do honour to God and true service to my prince, and pleasure to his Commons; how is it that his grace this considering, may either by himself think, or by the persuasions of others be brought to think, that in this doing I should not show a pure mind, or true and uncorrupt zeal and affection to his grace? Was there in me any such mind, when I warned his Grace to beware of his cardinal, whose iniquity he shortly after proved according to my writing? Doth this deserve hatred? Again, may his Grace, being a Christian prince, be so unkind to God, which hath commanded his Word to be spread throughout the world, give more faith to wicked persuasions of men, which presuming above God's wisdom, and contrary to that which Christ expressly commandeth in his Testament-day, say that it is not lawful for the people to have the same in a tongue that they understand—because the purity thereof should open men's eyes to see their wickedness? Is there more danger in the king's subjects than in the subjects of all other princes, which in every of their tongues have the same under privilege of their sufferance. As I now am, very death were more pleasant to me than life, considering man's nature to be such as can bear no truth.”**

A lengthy colloquy ensued, in which Vaughan “assayed him with gentle persuasions to know whether he would come into England.” This insidious invitation Tyndale, for obvious reasons, declined. ‘Being somewhat fearful of me,’ Vaughan says, ‘lest I should have pursued him, and drawing also toward night, he took his leave of me, and departed from the town, and I toward the town, saying, ‘I should shortly, peradventure, see him again, or if not, hear from him.’”

Tyndale left a favourable impression upon the English envoy, which he could not conceal. Cromwell, now Secretary of State, in his next despatch warns him to show “no manner of favour, love, or

* Cotton MS. Titus, b. i. fol. 67.

affection" for Tyndale, and tells him that the king "is without hope of reconciliation in him, and is very joyous to have his realm destitute of such a person."

Cromwell, to please the king, wrote in this severe and contemptuous strain, but added privately a passage in which he still advises Vaughan to persuade Tyndale to return.

At their next interview Vaughan showed this part of the letter to Tyndale:—

"After sight thereof," he writes, "I perceived the man to be exceedingly altered, and to take the same very near unto his heart. *The water stood in his eyes, and he answered, 'What gracious words are these?' I assure you if it would stand with the king's most gracious pleasure to grant only a bare text of the Scripture to be put forth among his people, like as is put forth among the subjects of the Emperor in these parts, and of other Christian princes, be it of the translation of what person soever it shall please his Majesty, I shall immediately make faithful promise never to write more, nor abide two days in these parts after the same, but immediately repair unto his realm, there most humbly submit myself at the feet of his royal Majesty, offering my body to suffer what pain or torture, yea, what death his Grace will, so that this be obtained. And till that time I will abide the asperity of all chances, whatsoever shall come, and endure my life in as much pain as it is able to bear and suffer.*"*

In closing his account of this remarkable conference, Vaughan could not refrain from expressing his favourable opinion of Tyndale. "I have some hope in the man," he says, "and would not doubt to bring him to some good point, were it that something now and then might proceed from your Majesty towards me, whereby the man might take the better comfort of my persuasions." The wilful monarch was in no mood to encourage Tyndale to a

* Cotton MSS. Galba, B. x. p. 8.

conscientious reconciliation. His object was rather to lure him to England that he might have the malignant pleasure of taking his life. He continued therefore his agents under the deceptive forms of diplomacy to effect his dark design. Sir Thomas Elyot,

Continued
search for
Tyndale,
1532.

who was at the court of the Emperor on the 14th of March, 1532, expressing his desire to return, adds, "but the king willeth me, by his Grace's letters, to remain at Brussels for some space of time, for the apprehension of Tyndale, which nourisheth my hope of soon return; considering that like as he is in wit moveable, so is his person uncertain to come by; and so far as I can perceive, hearing of the king's diligence in the apprehension of him, he withdraweth him into such places where he thinketh to be furthest out of danger. In me there shall lack none endeavour."

Though in exile, suffering great privations, and in constant peril, Tyndale never forgot the Christian people, who from reading his translation of the New Testament had been brought to a full conviction of the truth, and had formed themselves into Christian associations in different parts of England. The policy recommended by More was to "oppress and overwhelm them at the beginning."

Nix, Bishop of Norwich, writes to Warham, May 14th, 1530:—

"After most humble recommendation, I do your Grace to understand that I am encumbereth with such as keepeth and
Letter of the Bishop of Norwich, 1530. readeth these erroneous books in English, and believe and give credence to the same, and teacheth others that they should do so. My lord, I have done that lieth in me for the suppression of such persons: but it passeth my power, or any spiritual man for to do it. For

divers saith openly in my diocese that the king's grace would, that they should have the said erroneous books, and so maintaineth themselves of the king. Whereupon I desired my Lord Abbot of Hyde to show this to the king's grace, beseeching him to send his honourable letters under his seal, down to whom he please in my diocese. That they may show and publish that it is not his pleasure that such books should be had or read, and also punish such as saith so. I trust before this letter shall come unto you—my said Lord Abbot hath done so. The said Abbot hath the names of some *that cracketh in the king's name that their false opinions should go forth, and will die in this quarrel, that their ungracious opinions be true, and trusteth by Michaelmas-day there shall be more, that shall believe of their opinions, than they that believeth the contrary.* I can in no wise endure them. But I had greater authority to punish them than I have. Wherefore I beseech your good lordship to advertise the king's grace, as I trust the said Abbot hath done, before this letter shall come unto your grace, that a remedy may be had. For now it may be done well in my diocese; for the gentlemen and the commonty be not greatly infect; but merchants and such that hath their abiding not far from the sea. The said Abbot of Hyde can show you of a curate, and well learned in my diocese, that exhorteth his parishioners to believe the contrary to the Catholic faith.

"There is a college in Cambridge, called Gunwell Hall, of the foundation of a bishop of Norwich. I hear of no clerk that hath come out lately of that college but savoureth of the frying-pan, though he speak never so holily. I beseech your grace to pardon me of my rude and tedious writing to you. The zeal and love that I owe to Almighty God cause me thus to do."

In compliance with the wishes so strongly expressed, the king, in a proclamation issued May 28th, 1530, denounced in the strongest terms the writings of Tyndale. "Detest them," he said; "abhor them; keep them not in your hands. Deliver them to the superiors, such as call for them, *and if, by reading them heretofore, anything remaineth in your breasts of*

Proclamation against the writings of Tyndale, 1530.

that teaching, either forget it, or by information expel it and purge it. This I move and exhort you in God to do. This is your duty to do, and, being obstinate and denying or refusing thus to do, the prelates of the Church, having the cure and charge of your souls, ought to compel you and your prince to punish you not doing."

The timid disciple might well hesitate on reading such mandates as to the right course. The "Obedience of the Christian Man" was written by Tyndale to confirm the wavering and to guide the perplexed. "Let it not make thee despair," he says, "neither yet discourage thee, O reader, that it is forbidden thee, in pain of life and goods, or that is made breaking of the king's peace, or treason unto his highness, to read the Word of thy soul's health: but much rather be bold in the Lord and comfort thy soul—forasmuch as thou art sure, and hast an evident token through such persecution, that it is the true Word of God, which Word is ever hated of the world."

More trying to them than personal suffering, or the prospect even of martyrdom, was the apparent defeat sustained by the "little flock." They had no tokens of an early and glorious triumph. "God worketh backward," said the Christian exile to his discomfited brethren in England. "If God promise riches, the way thereto is poverty. Whom He loveth He chasteneth. Whom He exalteth He casteth down. He is no patcher; He cannot build on another man's foundation: He will not work until all be past remedy, and brought into such a case that men may see how that *His* hands, *His* power,

His mercy, *His* goodness and truth, hath wrought altogether."

Tyndale found, in his young friend JOHN FRITH, a coadjutor in all respects like-minded. Partakers together of the afflictions of the gospel, companions in exile, and fellow-labourers unto the kingdom of God, they were one

Friendship
of Frith and
Tyndale.

in sympathy and in aim. Tyndale enjoyed his friendship, and valued his help the more, from the trials and annoyance he suffered from two other temporary assistants—Roye and Joye. But the time of separation came. Frith left Antwerp in

1533, and Tyndale saw his face no more.

Return of
Frith to
England,
1533.

On his arrival in England, he set out on foot for Reading, to visit his relative, the prior of that town. He was so destitute and forlorn that a constable apprehended him as a vagrant, and brought him before the magistrates. Unwilling to make himself known, he maintained silence before the justices, who committed him, in their displeasure, to the stocks. Pressed with hunger, as he sat in durance, he sent at length for Leonard Coxe, a schoolmaster of the town, and entered into a conversation with him in Latin—first, in reference to his present condition; and then, as he forgot his miseries, on the state of classical learning in the universities of Europe. The sympathies of the brother scholar were awakened, and by his influence Frith was liberated—not, however, to find a home. He had no certain dwelling-place, and was compelled to assume various guises to obtain precarious shelter. As he could be in safety nowhere, he resolved to return to Flanders, and wandered to Milton, on the

Essex coast, intending to escape by some vessel that might touch at the port—but he was betrayed and brought back again, and committed to the Tower of London.

Bound as he was, he continued to write on theological subjects; and showed a discourse he had prepared on the sacrament to a fellow-prisoner, who professed great interest in the treatise, and requested the loan of it, that he might read it more attentively. Having obtained the manuscript, the treacherous fellow forwarded it to Sir Thomas More, who wrote a reply, a copy of which found its way to the cell of Frith; and received from him a rejoinder so powerful, that Raskall, the son-in-law of More—who also took part in the controversy—was converted to his views.

In these prison writings, Frith defended his friend Tyndale against the bitter attacks of Sir Thomas More.

“Frith, the young man,” More says, “teacheth, in a few leaves, shortly, all the poison that Wycliffe, Æcolampadius, Huskyn, Tyndale, and Zwinglius, have taught in all their books before, concerning the blessed sacrament of the altar: not only affirming it to be very bread still, as Luther doth, but also, as these *other beasts* do, saith it is *nothing else*. These dregs hath he drunken of Wycliffe, Æcolampadius, Tyndale, and Zwinglius, and so hath all that he argueth here before: which four, what manner of folk they be, is meetly well perceived and known, and God hath in part, with his open vengeance, declared.”

Frith, in reply, vindicated Wycliffe, Æcolampadius, and Zwinglius; and, with respect to his personal friend and co-worker he said:—

“And Tyndale, I trust, liveth well content with such a poor apostle’s life as God gave his Son Christ and his faithful minis-

ters in this world, which is not sure of so many mites as ye be yearly of pounds; although I am sure that, for his learning and judgment in Scripture, he were more worthy to be promoted than all the bishops in England. I received a letter from him, which was written since Christmas, wherein, among other matters, he writeth this: 'I call God to record, against the day we shall appear before our Lord Jesus to give a reckoning of our doings, that I never altered one syllable of God's Word against my conscience—nor would this day, if all that is in the earth, whether it be pleasure, honour, or riches, might be given me.' Judge, Christian reader, whether these words be not spoken of a faithful, clear, innocent heart. And for his behaviour, it is such that I am sure no man can reprove him of any sin; howbeit, no man is innocent before God, which beholdeth the heart."

In reply to More, who adjured them to "keep their writings so secretly that never man should see them," Frith gives him this challenge:—

"But this hath been offered you, is offered, and shall be offered. Grant that the Word of God—I mean the text of Scripture—may go abroad in our English tongue, as other nations have it in their tongues, and my brother William Tyndale and I have done, and will promise you to write no more. If you will not grant this condition, then will we be doing while we have breath, and show in few words that the Scripture doth in many; and so, at the least, save some."

The condition of Frith in the Tower was truly deplorable; yet even here he found the relief of Christian association. Mr. Petit, a wealthy merchant, who had helped Tyndale, was immured in another part of the gloomy fortress. He had been allowed, a short time before, by the under-keeper, to dine and sup with Bilney before his martyrdom, when in the next cell; and now the jailer surprised and cheered him by bringing Frith to converse with him.

The Archbishop of Canterbury (Cranmer) in a

short time sent a messenger to bring Frith to Croydon. The pursuivants in charge of him, on their way to Lambeth, tried to persuade him to submit and to save his life, but he remained steadfast. On their way to Croydon, they offered to give him an opportunity to escape. Pellibean, one of them, said to his companion, "You see yonder hill before us—Brixton Causeway? There are great woods on both sides. When we come there, we will permit Frith to go into the woods on the left hand of the way, whereby he may convey himself into Kent among his friends, for he is a Kentish man; and, when he is gone, we will linger an hour or two about the highway until it draw towards night. Then in great haste we will approach Streatham, and make an outcry in the town that our prisoner is broken from us on the right hand towards Wandsworth; so that we will draw as many as we can out of the town to search the country that way for our prisoner, declaring that we followed him about a mile or more, and at length lost him in the woods." The scheme, however kindly intended, did not commend itself to the honest mind of their prisoner. When near to the hill, "My Lord Canterbury's gentleman" said, "Now, Master Frith, let us twain commune together another while;" but he would not take the hint to run: Pellibean, almost angry with him, said, "I do much marvel that you were so willing to fly the realm before you were taken, and now so unwilling to save yourself."

"There was and is a great diversity of escaping between the one and the other," replied the Chris-

Removed to
Lambeth
and Croy-
don.

tian confessor. "Before, I was not attached, but at liberty—which liberty I would fain have enjoyed for the maintenance of my study beyond the sea, where I was reader in the Greek tongue, according to St. Paul's counsel. Howbeit, now, being taken by the higher power, and, as it were, by the permission and providence of God, delivered into the hands of the bishops, only for religion and doctrine's sake, such as in conscience I am bound to maintain and defend; if I should now start aside and run away, I should run away from my God, and from the testimony of his holy Word; and therefore I most heartily thank you both for your good will towards me, beseeching you to bring me where I was appointed to be brought, for else I will go thither all alone."

The next day Frith was brought before Cranmer, Archbishop of Canterbury and Dr. Heath, who sent him to Stokesby, Bishop of London. Finally, he was condemned in the consistory of St. Paul's to be burnt and committed to the charge of the mayor and sheriffs, who lodged him in Newgate. In delivering him to the secular power, the Bishop of London professed much tenderness.

Condemned
at St.
Paul's to
be burnt.

"Most earnestly requiring," he said, "in the bowels of our Lord Jesus Christ, that this execution and punishment worthily to be done upon thee, may be so *moderate*, that the rigour thereof be not too extreme, nor yet the gentleness too much mitigated, but that it may be to the salvation of thy soul, to the extirpation, terror, and conversion of heretics, and to the unity of the Catholic faith."*

* Burnet, Book ii. 1534, p. 163.

Cranmer, in explanation of his part of the hypocritical and cruel transaction, writes :—

“ One, Frith, which was in the Tower, in prison, was appointed by the king's grace to be examined before me, my Lord of London, my Lord of Winchester, and my Lord of Suffolk, my Lord Chancellor, and my Lord of Wiltshire, whose opinion was so notably erroneous that we could not despatch him, but were fain to leave him to the determination of his ordinary, which is the Bishop of London. His said opinion is of such nature, that he thought it not necessary to be believed as an article of our faith, that there is the very corporeal presence of Christ within the host and sacrament of the altar, and holdeth on this point much after the opinion of Ecolampadius. And surely I myself sent for him three or four times, to persuade him to leave that imagination. But for all that we could do herein, he would not apply to any counsel, notwithstanding now he is at a final end with all examinations, for my Lord of London hath given sentence, and delivered him to the secular power, when he looketh every day to go unto the fire; and there is also condemned with one, Andrew (Hewett), a tailor, for the same opinion, and thus fare you well.”

Frith was “ put into the dungeon under the gate, and laden with bolts and irons as many as he could bear, and his neck with a collar of iron, made fast to a post, so that he could not stand upright nor sit down.” In this comfortless position, and by the feeble light of a single candle, for he was excluded from the light of day, he occupied himself incessantly to cheer and guide his brethren, exposed to trial and suffering for the cause of Christ.

“ It cannot be expressed,” he says, in one of his epistles, “ dearly beloved in the Lord, what joy and comfort it is to my heart to perceive how the Word of God hath wrought, and con-

Prison letters of Frith.

tinually worketh among you, so that I find *no small number* walking in the ways of the Lord, according as He gave us commandment, willing that we should love each other as He loved us. Now have I experience of the faith which is in you, and can testify that is without simulation that ye love, not in word and tongue only, but in work and verity.

“What can be more trial of a faithful heart, than to adventure, not only to aid and succour by the means of other (which without danger cannot be admitted unto us); but also personally to visit the poor oppressed, and see that nothing be lacking unto them; but that they both have ghostly comfort and bodily maintenance, notwithstanding the strait inhibition and terrible menacing of these worldly rulers, ever ready to abide the extreme jeopardies that tyrants can imagine.

“This is an evidence that you have prepared yourselves to the cross of Christ, according unto the counsel of the wise man, which saith, ‘My son, when thou shalt enter into the way of the Lord, prepare thyself unto tribulation.’ I ever thought, and yet do think, that to walk after God’s Word would cost me my life at one time or another.

“And I beseech all the faithful followers of the Lord to arm themselves with the same supposition. Doubt not but that God, which is faithful, shall not suffer you to be tempted above that which ye are able to bear, but shall ever send some occasion by the which ye shall stand steadfast.

“He shall send a Joseph before you against ye shall come into Egypt; yea, He shall so provide for you, that ye shall have a hundred fathers for one, a hundred mothers for one, a hundred houses for one, and that in this life, as I have proved by experience, and after this life, everlasting joy with Christ our Saviour.

“Notwithstanding, since this steadfastness cometh not of ourselves (for as St. Austin saith), there was never man so weak or frail; no, not the greatest offender that ever lived, but that every man of his own nature should be as frail, and commit as great enormities, except he were kept from it by the spirit and power of God. I beseech you, brethren, in the Lord Jesus Christ, and for the love of his spirit, to pray with me, that we may be vessels to his laud and praise, what time it pleaseth Him to call upon us.”

Frith was not forgotten by his friends at Antwerp. Tyndale writes :—

“ Dearly beloved brother, however the matter be, commit yourself wholly and only unto your most loving Father and most kind Lord. Fear no men that threaten, nor trust men that speak fair, but trust Him that is true of promise and able to make his Word good. Your cause is Christ’s gospel; a light that must be fed with the blood of faith—the lamp must be dressed and snuffed daily, and that oil poured in every evening and morning, that the light go not out. Though we be sinners, yet is the cause right. If, when we be buffeted for well-doing, we suffer patiently and endure, that is acceptable with God, for to that end we are called. Rejoice and be glad, for great is your reward in heaven.

“ Dearly beloved, be of good courage, and comfort your soul with the hope of this high reward. Follow the example of all your other dear brethren, which chose to suffer in hope of a better resurrection. Keep your conscience pure and undefiled, and say against that, nothing. Stick at necessary things, and remember the blasphemies of the enemies of Christ, saying, they find none but who will abjure rather than suffer extremity. Moreover, the death of them that come again after that they have once denied, though it be accepted with God, and all that believe, yet it is not glorious. If you commit yourself wholly and only to your loving Father, then shall his power be in you and make you strong, and so strong that you shall feel no pain, which should be to another present death. To look for no man’s help, bringeth the help of God to them that seem to be overcome. There falleth not a hair, till his hour be come. Necessity carrieth us hence though we be not willing; but if we be willing, then have we a reward and thank. Let Bilney be a warning to you. He that endureth to the end shall be saved. If the pain be above your strength, remember, ‘ Whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, I will give it you.’ And pray to your Father in that name, and He shall cease your pain, or shorten it. The Lord of peace, of hope, and of faith, be with you. Amen.”

In a second letter Tyndale writes in a strain of solemn triumph :—

“Two have suffered in Antwerp in *die sanctae crucis*, unto the great glory of the gospel; four at Rysels in Flanders; and at Lieke hath there one at least suffered, and all the same day. At Rouen, in France, they persecute, and at Paris are five doctors taken for the gospel. See, you are not alone, be cheerful and remember that among the hard-hearted in England there is a number reserved by grace; for whose sake, if need be, you must be ready to suffer.

“Sir, if you may write, how short soever it be, forget it not, that we may know how it goeth with you, for our heart’s ease. The Lord be yet again with you, with all his plenteousness, and fill you that you flow over. Amen.

“If when you have read this you can send it to Adrian (Andrew Hewett), do, I pray you, that he may know how that our heart is with you.”

“*Sir, your wife is well content with the will of God, and would not for her sake have the glory of God hindered.*”

Tyndale had no misgiving for his faithful friend :—

“Brother beloved in my heart,” he writes again, “there liveth not one in whom my heart rejoiceth and my soul comforteth herself as in you. If there were in me any gift that could help at hand, and aid you if need required, I promise you I would not be far off, and commit the end to God. My soul is not faint, though my body be weary. But God hath made me ill-favoured in this world, and without grace in the sight of men, speechless and rude, dull and slow witted; your part shall be to supply what lacketh in me, remembering that as lowliness of heart shall make you high with God, even so meekness of words shall make you sink into the hearts of men. Nature giveth age authority, but meekness is the glory of youth, and giveth them honour. Abundance of love maketh me exceed in babbling. The mighty God of Jacob be with you, to supplant his enemies, and give you the favour of Joseph, and the wisdom and spirit of Stephen, be with your heart, and with your mouth, and teach your lips what they shall say and how to answer to all things.”

The prayers of Tyndale were answered. Frith won the day. He resisted every temptation, endured reproach with meekness, and answered all cavil and objection with calmness and yet with power that made his opponents glad to close the debate. His death was glorious. On the 4th of July, 1533, in company with Andrew Hewett, he received the crown of martyrdom.

In the sorrow Tyndale must have felt in the loss of his beloved and devoted fellow-labourer he

Tyndale employed as almoner. was not left comfortless. He was requested by the English merchants to supply a vacancy in benevolent and ministerial service at Antwerp. They made him the almoner of their bounty to the poor people who were driven to the city by persecution from England, and the most indigent of the general inhabitants. Two days in the week he spent in what he called his "pastime," in seeking out the afflicted and distressed, and in supplying to them the means of comfort and relief. On the Sabbath he held meetings morning and afternoon, at the chambers of the merchants, who listened to his expositions of Scripture with the deepest attention. He was

George Joy. called, however, to suffer from a new form of trial. George Joy, a printer at Antwerp, in a selfish spirit, tried to supplant Tyndale in the preparation of an English version of the Bible, which should give no offence to the authorities in England, and yet command an extensive sale amongst the people. He suppressed terms used by Tyndale, which had offended the priest party, and then sent a specimen of the edition to the king, hoping to obtain

his patronage. Tyndale was brought into extreme jeopardy by this foolish manœuvre. Four editions of the New Testament were called for in 1534, and at this time he was preparing for a fifth by a careful revision of the work. His enemies were once more on the alert, and suspecting that he was in the vicinity of Antwerp or Brussels, agents were employed to discover his hiding place. Still for nearly two years longer he eluded their vigilance. Ultimately Henry Philips, the detective employed by Henry VIII. and his council, fell upon his unsuspecting victim. This adept in malignant cunning was the son of a custom-house officer at Poole. He came to Antwerp with a valet in 1535, and passed among the merchants as a gentleman of fortune. Tyndale being often invited to dine with them, came in contact with his betrayer, and won by his manners, placed a fatal confidence in him, and took him to his apartment at the house of Thomas Poyntz.

Henry Philips, the betrayer of Tyndale, 1535.

From that day the lynx-eyed villain kept Tyndale in sight, and never rested until by various stratagems he had him within his grasp.

After a short acquaintance with the reformer, in which he received his generous hospitality, Philips went to Brussels, and with great pains obtained a warrant for the apprehension of his kind but deceived companion on a charge of heresy. Waiting his opportunity he came to the house with the procureur-general and officials from Brussels to arrest Tyndale at a time when Poyntz was absent in the country on business. In his usual bland and pleasant manner Philips called

Tyndale decoyed and arrested.

at the residence of Tyndale on the day of his apprehension and requested the loan of forty shillings. "I lost my purse this morning," he said, "coming over at the passage between this and Mechlin." Tyndale, without a word, supplied the sum by emptying his own.

"Master Tyndale," said the audacious deceiver, "you shall be my guest here to-day." "No," replied Tyndale, "I go forth this day to dinner, and you shall go with me and be my guest, where you shall be welcome." It was so agreed, and Philips amused himself until dinner-time taking in his mind an inventory of the effects he should have to send for when he had placed his prisoner in safe custody. The time came for setting out to dine. On leaving the house they had to pass through a long narrow entry, in which two persons could not go abreast. Tyndale wished to give place to his guest, but Philips was too polite to allow himself to take precedence. "So Master Tyndale, being a man of no great stature, went before, and Philips, a tall comely person, followed behind him, who had set officers on either side of the door, upon two seats (which being there, might see who came into the entry), and coming through the same entry, Philips pointed with his finger over Master Tyndale's head to him, that the officers which sat at the door might see that it was he whom they should take."

Tyndale dined that day with the emperor's attorney, and at night found himself in a dungeon at the castle of Vilvorden, between Brussels and Mechlin, and eighteen miles from Antwerp.

Thomas Poyntz, on his return home, was greatly

distressed to find that Tyndale was taken, and set himself with the utmost diligence to effect if possible his deliverance. He apprized the English merchants of the occurrence, and furnished with letters from them he followed the Lord of "Barowe" from post to post on a journey, and with much difficulty obtained an audience. He then returned, with the answer he received, to the imperial council at Brussels. They gave him a letter to Cromwell, which he conveyed to London with all speed. The English merchants of Antwerp had written to the Secretary of State on the subject, and had some hope that the fatal issue might be prevented, but they judged that a personal application might be more effectual; Poyntz was the most likely person to plead the cause of the reformer. After the painful detention of a month in England, Poyntz went again to Brussels, strengthened by documents that he supposed might at least rescue Tyndale for a time. His efforts were thwarted by two Englishmen at Louvain, and by a master-stroke of wicked policy by Philips. In order to silence Poyntz entirely, and to seclude him from all communication with his friends, he instituted a process of law against him, which would have the effect of detaining him in prison until Tyndale should be beyond the reach of human help.

*Distress of
Poyntz the
friend of
Tyndale.*

*Fruitless
efforts of
Poyntz to
save Tyn-
dale.*

Poyntz wrote to his brother John in London, August 25th, 1535 :—

"It was said that the king had written in favour of William Tyndale now in prison, and like to suffer death, and it is feared that these letters have been intercepted. This man lodged with me three quarters of a year. I know that the king has never a truer-hearted subject this day living. He knows that he is

bound by the law of God to obey his prince, and I know well that he would not do the contrary to be made lord of the world. The death of this man will be a great hindrance to the gospel, and to the enemies of it one of the highest pleasures. I fear that he will be shortly condemned, for two Englishmen at Louvain apply for it sore, taking great pains to translate out of English into Latin those things that make against him, as they have done all others, for keeping opinions contrary to their business, the which they call the order of the holy Church. Brother, the knowledge that I have of this man causes me to write as my conscience binds me, for the king's grace should esteem him at this day as a greater treasure than any man living."*

Tyndale remained more than a year in prison. There was ample time, therefore, for Cromwell and Cranmer to have interposed in his favour. Vaughan writes, April 13th, 1536, "If now you send me but your letter to the Privy Council, I could deliver Tyndale from the fire, so it come by time, for else it will be too late." But we find no sign of a movement for his deliverance.

Thomas Theobald, employed as a spy on the continent by Cranmer and Cromwell, furnishes some particulars respecting the betrayer of Tyndale:—

"I have had long communication," he says, "with him which hath taken Tyndale, called Harry Philips. I made him believe that I was minded to tarry and study at Louvain. I could not perceive the contrary by his conversation, but that Tyndale (shall die), which he doth follow and procureth with all diligent endeavour, rejoicing withal that he had a commission also for to have taken Dr. Barnes and George Joye, with others. Then I showed him that it was conceived both in England and in Antwerp, that George Joye should be of counsel with him in the taking of Tyndale, and he answered that he never saw Joye to his knowledge. This I do write because George Joye is greatly blamed among merchants, and many others that were his friends, falsely and wrongfully.

Letter of
Theobald.

* Galba, x. 60 p.

But this foresaid Harry Philips showed me that there was no man of his counsel but a monk of Stratford Abbey, besides London, called Gabriel Donne, which at that time was resident in Louvain, and in house with this foresaid Harry Philips, but now for these five or six weeks he is come to England, and by the help of Mr. Secretary hath obtained an abbey of a thousand marks by the year in the west country. This said Philips is greatly afraid insomuch as I could perceive that the English merchants that be in Antwerp will lay wait to do him some pleasure privily. Wherefore of truth he hath sold his books in Louvain, to the value of twenty marks' worth. He is intending to go hence to Paris and doth tarry here upon nothing but of the return of his servant, which he hath long since sent to England with letters, and because of his long tarrying he is marvellously afraid lest he should be taken or come into Master Secretary's handling with his letters. Either this Philip hath great friends in England to maintain him here, or else, as he showed me, he is well beneficed in the bishopric of Exeter. He railleth at Louvain and in the Queen of Hungary's court against our king's grace and others, for I being present he called our king's highness tyrant *expilatore* *resp*, with many other railing words, and trusteth to see the Emperor scourge his Highness with his council and friends."*

Hutton reported the final decision in the case of Tyndale to Lord Cromwell, August 12th, 1536, in the following terms: "So it is that after the tenth day of this present, the Procureur-general, which is the emperor's attorney for these parts, dined with me here in the English house, who certified me that William Tyndale is degraded and condemned into the hands of the secular power; so that he is very likely to suffer death this week."

Tyndale
condemned
to die,
1536.

The end was near. There is reason to believe that Tyndale was fully occupied to the last. During his imprisonment, an edition of the New Testament

* Galba, b. x.

in a provincial dialect was sent to the press, that might be understood by the "ploughmen." A third edition of his "Obedience of a Christian Man," was also printed, with other tracts. He found a friend in his jailer, who with his daughter, and other members of his family, are said to have been converted by his teaching.

On the morning of the 6th of October, 1536, he was brought from the castle to the town of Vilvorden

Executed
at Vil-
vorden.

and led to the place of execution, tied to the stake, then strangled by the hangman, and afterwards consumed with fire.

"Lord," said the martyr, as he yielded to the last stroke of his tormentors, "open the King of England's eyes." The man who rendered service to England the most important and valuable it is possible to imagine, suffered from his countrymen the most cruel injustice. The scholars and divines who survived him, in their pride and envy, tried, though in vain, to supersede his labours, and to give to the world an English translation of the Holy Scriptures substantially his own, whilst suppressing his name. We can point to no man of that remarkable period so clear in his doctrinal teaching, so consistent in his Christian profession, so disinterested and of such admirable temper; but scores of names have received prominence when that of Tyndale was cast into the shade. Yet he lost nothing in the end, nor did the truth suffer from this mean and ungrateful preterition. The Lord reserves to Himself the gracious award for service that men have failed to understand or to appreciate.

JOHN ROGERS, a student of Cambridge, converted

by the instrumentality of Tyndale, was welcomed as a minister of the English merchants at Antwerp, and in secret he had commenced the printing of the folio work known as Matthew's Bible. He became the proto-martyr of the Marian persecution, but the witness for the Congregational principles held by Tyndale, next in order to him, was JOHN NICHOLSON, who, it seems, for concealment, assumed the name of LAMBERT. This eminent scholar was a companion of Tyndale and Frith in Antwerp, but was lured into England by an agent of Sir Thomas More, and narrowly escaped a violent death during the primacy of Warham. In his examination by the prelates he contended with great earnestness and intelligence for the authority of the Word of God—the equality of Christian bishops, and their right to preach the Word of God in all places convenient, and to whomsoever it shall please them, if they suppose and see that preaching should edify and profit, and the right of the people to read the Word of God in their own tongue.

John
Rogers.

John
Nicholson,
or Lambert.

On the elevation of Cranmer to the primacy, Lambert preferred to pursue his studies in comparative seclusion, and occupied himself as teacher of Latin and Greek. He kept a school in the neighbourhood of Stocks' Market, on the site of which the Mansion House in London is built. In 1538 he heard a sermon preached by Dr. Taylor at St. Peter's Church, London. At the close of the discourse Lambert submitted to the preacher his views on the subject of the sacrament, and at the suggestion of Dr. Taylor, committed them to paper. This written

treatise was sent to Cranmer by Dr. Barnes. The Archbishop cited Lambert to defend his cause in open court. The nobles of the land were summoned for the occasion to Westminster Hall, November 16th, 1538. The king, on an elevated stage, mantled in a robe of purest white, and surrounded by a splendid retinue, occupied the judgment-seat. On his right hand sat the bishops, and behind them the famous lawyers, clothed all in purple. On the left hand sat the peers of the realm, justices, and other nobles in their order, behind whom sat the gentlemen of the king's privy chamber. Before this imposing array the plain schoolmaster stood in the armour of truth, and sustained by an unwavering faith.

Trial at
West-
minster
Hall, 1538.

For five hours he met with Christian simplicity and a ready use of Scripture the coarse insults of the royal theologian and the calmer argumentation of the primate, added to the perplexing harangues of Gardiner and the rest of the ecclesiastical assessors. At the end of this time Lambert was asked by the exulting monarch whether he was "satisfied?" "Wilt thou live or die? Thou hast yet free choice." Lambert meekly replied: "I yield myself and submit myself wholly unto the will of your majesty." Then said the king, "Commit thyself unto the hands of God and not unto mine." Lambert rejoined: "I commend my soul unto the hands of God, but my body I wholly yield and submit unto your clemency." "If you do commit yourself unto my judgment," said the king, "you must die, for I will not be a patron unto heretics." Then, turning to the vicar-general, he said, "Crom-

well, read the sentence against him." Cromwell complied, and pronounced condemnation against the martyr in the usual form.

On the day appointed for Lambert to suffer, he was brought out of prison at eight o'clock in the morning to Lord Cromwell's house and taken into his chamber. When Cromwell Martyrdom of Lambert. asked his forgiveness for what he had done, the noble-minded confessor evinced the most edifying spirit of charity. He saluted all present, partook of the repast set before him, and was then taken to Smithfield, where he endured the extremest tortures his malignant persecutors could inflict. As death came to his relief, he exclaimed with his last breath, "None but Christ! none but Christ."

There could have been little sincerity in the request of Cromwell for forgiveness. Writing to Sir Thomas Wyatt, he says :—

"The sixteenth of this present month the king's majesty, for the reverence of the holy sacrament of the altar, did sit openly in his hall; and there presided at the disputation, process, and judgment of a miserable heretic sacramentary, who was burnt the twentieth of the same month. It was a wonder to see how princely, with how excellent gravity, and inestimable majesty his majesty exercised the very office of a superior head of *his* Church of England; how benignly his grace essayed to convert the miserable man: how strong and manifest reason his highness alleged against him. I wished the princes of Christendom to have seen it; undoubtedly they should have much marvelled at his majesty's most high wisdom and judgment, and reputed him none otherwise after the same than in manner the mirror and light of all other kings and princes in Christendom. The same was done openly with great solemnity." *

Letter of
Cromwell.

* Nott's Wyatt, p. 326.

The testimony of Tyndale was not lost or forgotten. Becon tells us in his Dialogue, that in the remote village of Alsop, in the Peak of Derbyshire, he found the "Obedience of the Christian Man," the "Parable of the Wicked Mammon," the "Revelation of Antichrist," "The Sum of Holy Scripture," and the Book of John Frith against Purgatory. Several years after the death of Tyndale there was a demand for his writings in Scotland. Sir Andrew Dudley, Governor of Broughty Craig, writing to Somerset, November 1st, 1547, says : "They are much desirous here in the country of Angus and Fife to have a good preacher, and Bibles and Testaments, and other good English books of Tyndale and Frith's translation. Desiring your Grace to have a preacher and books sent to me, to give to gentlemen and other honest men of the country, for I have promised a great sort, and if there were a bookbinder that came hither with books he should sell them very well, and also I think he should do very much good in all the country."*

* R. O. MSS.

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE groundwork of a scriptural Reformation was laid, under God, by the martyr Tyndale. The principles he inculcated so clearly were never forgotten, and amidst all the vicissitudes of the country during the reign of the Tudors, we find, from time to time, evidence of their practical influence and power. We must continue to follow the track of these principles, undiverted by the consideration of political events relating rather to the history of the Anglican Establishment than to the development of Christianity in its primitive spirit and form. It may be instructive, however, to glance at the course of the reformation attempted by Henry VIII., if only to mark the contrast between the agencies he employed and the result of his measures, and the silent but resistless growth of the truth disseminated by its faithful, though obscure and despised, witnesses. We are very happy to be under no necessity to consider the question relating to the wives of the English monarch. On his rupture with the Pope, the king claimed spiritual and temporal supremacy. The arguments of Marsilius were repeated, and his work circulated, in support

Ground-
work of a
scriptural
Reforma-
tion laid by
Tyndale.

Political
reformation
of Henry
VIII.

of the royal pretensions. Dr. Fox, Bishop of Hereford, wrote a book entitled, *De Differentia Regiæ et Ecclesiasticæ Potestatis*. It was maintained by writers on the side of the king that there was no foundation whatever for the power of the Pope. The claims of the king to supremacy were justified by reference to the Jewish Theocracy. Saul, it was contended, was made the head of all the tribes (1 Sam. xv. 18). David said to Solomon (1 Chron. xxviii. 21), that the courses of the priests and all the people were to be wholly at his commandment. (2 Chron. viii. 14, 15) "The priests and Levites departed not from his commandment in any matter." The bishops, anxious to retain their sees, acquiesced very generally in this new doctrine. Fisher, Bishop of Rochester, was an exception. His prelatical brethren tried to smooth over his difficulties, but he could not overcome his scruples, arising from the oath he had taken of obedience to the Pope. At an earlier stage of the Henrican reformation, he had earnestly deprecated the changes proposed for the sanction of Parliament. "My lords," he said to the House of Peers, "beware of yourselves and your country; beware of our holy mother, the Catholic Church. The people are subject unto novelties, and Lutheranism spreads itself amongst us. Remember Germany and Bohemia, what miseries are befallen them already; and let our neighbours' houses, that are now on fire, teach us to beware our own disasters. Wherefore, my lords, I will tell you plainly what I think: that, except you resist manfully, by your authorities, this violent heap of mischief offered by

Fisher's
speech in
the House
of Lords.

the Commons, you shall see all obedience first drawn from the clergy, and secondly from yourselves ; and if you search into the true causes of all the mischiefs which reign among them, you shall find that they all arise through want of faith." *

Some of the unbeneficed priests did not confine their resistance to the utterance of earnest speech. Being required to pay a subsidy, in the form of a New Year's gift, to the royal exchequer, they created more "tumult and disorder" than might have been expected from a body of persons holding the sacred office. In the Star Chamber (Sir Thomas More, chancellor), a bill was filed against Sir William Gibson, Sir William Stodard, and Sir John Jefferies, priests, who, on the 30th of August, 1532, assailed the Bishop of London. They unlawfully assembled themselves together at the conventual church, commonly called the Grey Friars, in the City of London, there to consult and devise among themselves how they might "murder and slay" the bishop. After long consultation, they gathered to themselves certain riotous, seditious, and evil-disposed persons, who, with "bills, swords, and bucklers, short daggers, and other like weapons," made a desperate assault upon the bishop's palace at St. Paul's, where they continued for the space of half-an-hour, or thereabout ; and from thence, in a riotous manner, returned back into the Chapter-House, and in a like manner made a new assault upon the bishop and his attendants. So desperate were these militant priests, that, if the friends and adherents of the beleaguered prelate had

Assault of
the Bishop
of London
by priests.

* Life of Fisher, by Bailly (pseud.), 96.

not, "by good means and policy," assuaged their rancour and malice, there must have been a fatal termination of the affray.

The monks of "Syon" indulged in a highly treasonable conversation :—

"When they were talking to and fro at Syon," we read in another indictment, "the parson of Teddington said, 'Will no one write against the king's evil deeds?' The parson of Isleworth shook his head, and declared that in truth there was sufficient reason to write against the king, and, forgetting that 'He that keepeth his mouth keepeth his life,' began to think aloud in the following terms: 'Sith the realm of England was first a realm, was there never in it so great a robber and piller of the Commonwealth read nor heard of as is our king. And not only we that be of the Spirituality, by his wrong, be oppressed and robbed of our living as if we were his enemies—enemies unto Christ, and guilty of his death—but also thus ungodly doth he handle innocents, and also highly learned and virtuous men; not only robbing them of their living and spoiling them of their goods, but also thrusting them into perpetual prison, so that it is too great pity to hear, and more to be lamented than any good Christian man's ears may abide. Of a truth he is the most cruellest capital heretic, defacer, and treader under foot of Christ and his Church—continually minding and applying to extinct the same. And also the lay-fee, sometimes the noble, and sometimes the commons, without difference, upon chance and displeasure given, or of truth foresought and feigned, he doth impoverish, destroy, and kill, for none other intent but that he may enjoy and use his foul pleasures, and increase to himself great treasure and riches, enriching strangers, and pyling and robbing his own subjects—whose death I beseech God may be like to the death of the most wicked John, some time king of this realm, or rather be called a great *tyran* than a king; and that his death may not be much unlike to the end of that man-queller Richard, some time usurper of this imperial realm.'"

* See Third, Fourth, and Fifth Reports of the Deputy-Keeper of the Public Records.

These perturbations in the ecclesiastical system had no effect, however, in deterring the royal innovator from prosecuting his designs. A proclamation was issued at the same time, Clergy ordered to preach and declare the title of the king. enjoining every bishop, in his own person, "to teach, preach, publish, and declare, in all manner of churches, the just title, style, and jurisdiction of the king, on every Sunday and high feast throughout the year; and, further, to command all schoolmasters within his dioceses to instruct and teach the same unto the children committed unto them." The sheriffs were commanded "to make diligent search whether the bishops did truly, sincerely, and without all manner of cloke, colour, or dissimulation, execute and accomplish the royal commandment." The king, in his address to these functionaries, adds:—

"If ye should, contrary to our expectation and trust which we have in you, and against your duty and allegiance towards us, neglect or omit to do, with all your diligence and wisdom, whatsoever shall be in your power for the performance of our mind and pleasure, to you before declared in this behalf, or halt or stumble at any part or speciality of the same, be ye assured that we, like a prince of justice, will to extremity punish you for the same, that all the world besides shall take warning by your example, and beware, contrary to their allegiance, to disobey the lawful command of their sovereign lord and prince in such things."

More and Fisher strove to preserve a cautious neutrality; but, as the law of treason now took cognizance of the "wish" and "desire," it was presumed, from their Execution of More and Fisher. want of cordiality, they must have felt some repugnance to the royal supremacy—otherwise they would

have acknowledged it with frankness. Sir Thomas More, therefore, was condemned, and beheaded at the Tower on the 7th day of July, 1535. Fisher was made cardinal by the Pope in order to his protection; but Henry VIII. had no further respect for Romish dignitaries, and his Eminence was executed June, 1535.

The friends of the Papacy consoled themselves with the persuasion that, as the reward of his martyrdom, he was advanced to the highest rank in heaven. An original memorandum to this effect remains, in the handwriting of Father Daly, a monk of the Charterhouse:—

“When Father Raby,” he says, “a very old man, fell sick, and lay upon his bed, and after the time he was anealed and had received all the sacraments of the Church in the presence of all the convent, and when all they were departed, I said unto him, ‘Good Father Raby, if the dead may come to the quick, I beseech you to come to me;’ and he said, ‘Yea,’ and immediately he died in the same night, which was in the cleansing days last past, anno 1534; and since that I never did think upon him to Saint John Day Baptist last past.”

To be particular, we give the rest of Father Daly’s statement *literatim*:—

“Item, apon Saturday next after, at five of the clocke in the mornynge, in the same place in our entre, he appered to me agayn, with a lange whyte berd, and a whyte staff in his hand, lyftyng it up. Whereupon I was affrayd; and then, lenynge apon hys staff, sayd to me, ‘I am sory that I lyved not to I had bin a marter,’ and he said, ‘I thinke ye be as will as ye war a marter;’ and he said, ‘Nay, for my lord of Rochester (Fisher) and our father was next unto angells in hevyn;’ and then I said, ‘Father, what ells?’ and then he answered and sayd, ‘The angells of pease ded lamment and murne with out mesur,’ and so vanyushed away.”*

* Cleop. E. iv. 129.

The heaven of which Father Raby spoke could not be that described in the sure word of Revelation, for there shall be "no more crying." It was, no doubt, only a monastic dream of the "Father."

Under the new *régime* Cromwell permitted the circulation of the writings of the Reformers in England, in opposition to the papal authority. Very curiously we find a translation of Francis Lambert was published by Tristram Revel, entitled the "Sum of Christianity, containing an Epistle to Anne Boleyn." It was printed at Marburg, In the dedication to the "Noble prince of Lausanne," Lambert says :—

"You shall not marvel that it is said there be many bishops of one city, for verily every city hath so many bishops as it hath true evangelists or preachers. For verily every preacher of the truth, I say of the truth, that doth not preach lies, decrees, inventions, dreams, laws, and counsels of men, but the most pure and simple Word of God, is a true bishop, although he be not called so of many—the Church of God hath no other bishops than these.

Treatise of
Francis
Lambert,
dedicated
to Anne
Boleyn.

"Every parish ought to have its proper bishop, the which should be chosen of the people and confirmed of the commonalty of the church of every place ; and to do this thing they have no need of letters, rings, seals, tokens, and such other of this kind, very much used contrary to the Word of God. And so long they should be accounted for bishops, as they preach most purely the gospel of the kingdom of God, from the which if they swerve one iota, and teach strange doctrine, they ought to be deposed, and put out by them by whom they were elect and chosen, that is to say of the commonalty of the church aforementioned, and other more fit for the purpose to be elect.

"It is the most grievous crime and by no means to be suffered, that many children of perdition do deprive the people of God of their right and just title, that is to choose them a pastor. All the canons of the world cannot lawfully choose one bishop of the Church of Jesus Christ. Deacons of the Church are those that the faithful choose to

gather and distribute to the poor the alms of the faithful. The Church hath no other official members besides those of bishops and deacons."

In their new and critical position the anti-papal advisers of the king sought an alliance with the German princes. Amongst the propositions submitted to the Privy Council in 1533, we find the following :—

"*Item.* Certain discreet and grave persons to be appointed to repair unto the parts of Germany to practise and conclude some league or amity with the princes and potentates of Germany, that is to say, the King of Pole, King John of Hungary, the Duke of Saxony, the Dukes of Bavaria, the Duke of Frederick, the Landgrave of Hesse, the Bishop of Mayence, the Bishop of Treves, the Bishop of Cologne, and other potentates of Germany, and also to ensearch of what inclination the said princes and potentates be of towards the king and this realm." *

A similar course was adopted by the court of France. Francis I. felt a strong desire to act independently of the Pope. Du Bellay his minister, had long tried to form a military combination that would give peace to Christendom, and put an end to theological disputations that threatened national disorder. In self-defence the persecuted Protestants entered into alliances which in turn provoked the hostility of the Roman Catholic powers. No country in Europe in consequence enjoyed a sense of security. Failing to bring the Pope and the principal sovereigns into a confederacy for this purpose, Bellay tried to secure his object by a conference with the opposing theologians. Melancthon at this time became the great

Alliance
sought with
Protestant
princes,
1533.

Negotiation
of Francis
I. with the
Reformers.

* Cotton Cleop. E. vi. fol. 319.

apostle of compromise. Margaret of Valois, the sister of Francis I., encouraged him to expect that the "preceptor of Germany" "would have influence sufficient, if invited to Paris, to induce the doctors of the Sorbonne to agree to a platform of doctrine and polity with the Protestant princes who would pledge their subjects to the desired uniformity. William du Bellay entered upon the task committed to him with caution, but in the sanguine hope that all differences of opinion would now terminate. The time might have been deemed unpropitious, for Francis I. had just treated the Lutherans in Paris with great severity, but the negotiators of religious peace trusted that by skill and address the difficulties in the way would soon be overcome. Bellay attempted, in the first instance, to win the Pope to his views. Under his inspiration Francis I. submitted a proposition to his Holiness for a general conference.

"It is true," he said, "as the holy father affirms, that the assembly of a council has its dangers. On the other hand, the reasons of the Emperor for convoking are most worthy of consideration: for the affairs of religion are reduced to such a pass that without a council they will fall into inextricable confusion, and the consequence will be great evils and prejudice to the holy father and all Christian princes. The Pope is right, yet the Emperor is not wrong, but here is a way of gratifying their wishes, and at the same time preventing all the dangers that threaten us.* Let all the Christian potentates, *whatever be their particular doctrine*, first communicate with one another on the subject, and then let each of them send to Rome as soon as possible ambassadors provided with ample powers to discuss and draw up by common accord all the points to be considered by the council. They shall have full liberty to bring forward anything that they

* Du Bellay Mem., p. 185.

imagine will be for the unity, welfare, and repose of Christendom, the service of God, the suppression of vice, the extirpation of heresy, and the *uniformity of our faith*. No mention shall be made of the remonstrances of our holy father, or of the decisions of former councils which would give many sovereigns an opportunity or an excuse for not attending. When the articles are thus drawn up by the representatives of the various states of Christendom, each ambassador will take a duplicate of them to his courts, and all will go to the council, at the time and place appointed by them; well instructed in what they will have to say. If those who have separated from the Roman Church agree with the others, they will in this way take the path of salvation. If they do not agree, at least they will not be able to deny that they have been deaf to reason, and refused the council which they had called for so loudly." *

This fine scheme of averaging religious belief, which took no manner of cognizance of personal conviction, fell through. Charles V. demurred, for he had no idea of taking part with princes of inferior rank to settle questions already determined by papal authority. Nevertheless Bellay kept his object continually in mind. After attending the meeting of princes at Augsburg in 1534, to advocate the claims of the Protestant Duke of Wurtemberg, he stopped at Strasburg to confer with Bucer, Capito, Hedio, and Zell, and to propound his scheme of mediation. This voluntary council of divines met the cardinal in the library of Bucer, and were enchanted with his plausible notions. They recommended to him their friend Ulric Chelius, as the most suitable person to interest the Reformers at Wittenberg, in the plan of pacific uniformity. Francis I. approved of the steps taken by Bellay. Chelius left Strasburg for Wittenberg, in July, 1534, and called upon Melanc-

* Bellay Mem., pp. 186, 187.

thon. "King Francis," he said, "desires truth and unity. In almost every particular he is in accord with you, and approves of your book of *Common Places*.* I am authorized to ask you for a plan to put an end to the religious dissensions which disturb Christendom." Melancthon cordially approved. He saw in the proposal the panacea he had long desired.

Chelius next went to see Luther, and said: "If a few good and learned men, brought together by certain sovereigns, were to confer freely and amicably together, it would be easy, believe me, to come to an understanding with each other.† Ignorant men know nothing about the matter, and make the evil greater than it is."‡

Melancthon entered into direct communication with Bellay. "I entreat you," he said, "to prevail upon the great monarchs to establish a concord which shall be consistent with piety.§ The dangers which threaten us are such that so great a man as you ought not to be wanting in the cause of the State and of the Church."

Bellay needed no outward stimulus. His self-complacency in the work was unbounded. His aim was really to establish concord between Christ and Belial, and to blend light with darkness, unconscious as yet that the task was hopeless.

Melancthon, with great promptitude, set himself to sketch the plan of the ecclesiastical omnibus. Chelius hastened to submit the design to Bucer at his house in Strasburg (August 17th). "Really,"

* Gerdesius Hist. Evang. Renov. iv. p. 114.

† Corpus Ref. ii. p. 976.

‡ Ibid. p. 740.

§ Ibid.

said Bucer, "there is nothing here to offend any body, if people have the least idea of what the reign of Christ means. But, my dear Chelius," he added, "*a union is possible only among those who truly believe in Christ.* That there should be a superior authority, well and good, but it must be a *holy* authority in order that every man may obey it with a good conscience. If we are to unite, all additions must be cut away, and we must return simply to the doctrine of Scripture and Fathers." To complete the preparation for the proposed discussion, Bucer and Hedio, at the request of Chelius, gave a written statement of their views. The documents were submitted to Bellay and Francis I. in Paris, and meetings were held at the Louvre for the consideration of the questions involved. Francis I. wrote to the Protestant princes to apprise them of the important movement. "My envoy," he said to them, "having laid before me the opinions of your doctors on the course to be pursued, I entertain a hope of seeing the affairs of religion enter upon a fair way at the last." Bellay informed the magistrates of Augsburg, Ulm, Nuremberg, Memmingen, and other imperial cities, that the King of France approved of the Lutheran doctrines, and would protect the Protestants. In October and November, 1534, an agent from Francis I. visited the cities of the Germanic empire, announcing everywhere that the king now saw his mistake in religious matters, and that the Germans who followed Luther thought correctly as regards the faith that is in Christ." The French envoy said: "The emperor wishes to constrain the Protestants by force of arms to keep to

the old doctrine, but this the King of France will not permit. He has sent me into Germany to form an alliance with you to that intent."* Francis I. invited Melancthon to visit Paris on this grand occasion :—

"I have understood," he writes from Guise, 28th of June, 1535, "for sometime by William Du Bellay Sieur, of Langey, a gentleman of our chamber, and counsellor of our privy council, the singular desire you have to restore peace and to appease the troubles and divisions that now exist in the Church. Since by the letters you have written, and from the report given to me by Barnabas Voræus on his return, I learn that you are willing to take the trouble to pay me a visit in order to confer with our doctors and theologians upon the reunion of the Church, and the re-establishment of the ancient ecclesiastical polity, a thing that I desire to realize with all possible care and solicitude. It may be that you will come as a private individual attending to his own affairs. You will be cordially welcome, and you will find me sincerely desirous of the peace, tranquillity, honour, and dignity of Germany."

Melancthon
invited to
Paris, 1535.

Melancthon replied from Saxony, 5th of September, 1535 :—

"Most Christian and most powerful king !—Although the far-famed kingdom of France greatly surpasses every other in the known world, in many other honourable distinctions, this may be observed with special approval, that it has always excelled the rest of the nations in purity of doctrine and perpetual zeal in defence of the Christian religion. It has, therefore, deservedly obtained the appellation of the most happy and most *Christian*, a title the most glorious, the most magnificent that can be conferred. I congratulate your majesty that at this juncture you have undertaken the care of preserving the Church, not by the application of violent remedies, but by natural means worthy of the name of the *most Christian king*; and that in the midst of

Reply of
Melancthon,
1535.

* Lanz Correspondence de l'Empereur Charles Quint, ii. p. 144; Gerdesius Hist. Evang. Renov. iv. p. 124.

the present dissensions you have so studied to moderate the violence of opposing parties, that the genuine unadulterated doctrines of Christianity, the glory of Christ, the true dignity of the ecclesiastical constitution, and the tranquillity of the state, may be promoted. Nothing can be imagined more becoming a king than this disposition of mind and these proceedings. I beseech your majesty to persevere in care and concern for your kingdom; for although public dissension has in some instances furnished occasion of mischief to violent and evil-minded ecclesiastics, yet good men have brought forward in the Church many things which are essentially conducive to its welfare. Although therefore, mischievous disposition of mind ought to be restrained, yet I entreat your majesty not to be influenced by the better sentiments or writings of the calumnious, to suffer good and useful regulations to be abandoned in the churches. For my own part I have never been pleased with those intemperate counsels which have degraded the best and most holy order of the church, and which ought ever to be held in peculiar veneration; and I am well persuaded that all good men in your nation, who value the truth as I do, cherish this feeling. When I received your royal invitation, God is my witness how much I have laboured immediately to comply with it, for nothing would gratify me so much as to be of some service to the Church according to my feeble capacity, and I indulge the most pleasing anticipations from my knowledge of the piety, the moderation, and the constant aim to promote the glory of Christ displayed by your majesty. But Voræus can detail the numerous difficulties which have delayed my visit, and which, though they should prevent this journey, cannot detach my mind from a steady purpose of checking by my advice and exertions the existing controversies. Voræus will, however, fully state my views.

“Finally, I commit myself to your royal favour, promising constantly to contribute my judgment with that of the pious and learned men of the Church for the general good. May Christ preserve your majesty in prosperity and safety, that your government may promote the general happiness of the world and the glory of God.”

These complimentary epistles led to no satisfactory issue. Francis I. proposed to the University of

Paris to choose a certain number of doctors to meet the German Protestants, but they objected to the proposed conference as useless and full of danger. They suggested rather that the "memoir" of Melancthon should be sent to the faculty for examination.

The Cardinal de Tournon, Archbishop of Lyons, exerted his influence also to break off the negotiations. He entered one day into the chateau of the king, having a book under his arm. "You have a fine book, monseigneur," said his majesty, glancing over the beautiful illustrative engravings. "Sire," replied the archbishop, "it is indeed a splendid book, written by one of the first bishops of Lyons. By chance I fell upon a passage in the third chapter, in which Irenæus says that he had heard Polycarp say that Saint John would not have the least communication with heretics. That holy apostle entering the public baths one day met the heretic Cerinthus, and cried out, 'Flee from this place into which this impious man has set his foot for fear you should be crushed beneath its ruins.' Sire," added the archbishop, "you have not the light of an apostle, and notwithstanding your power, you may be easily misled. Yet it is said that you have promised a public audience to one of the chiefs of Lutheranism. How perilous are such interviews." The king countermanded the passport which had been prepared for Melancthon. An examination was entered into by the Sorbonne, and a reply given to the several propositions in detail. Francis I. reverted to his course of sanguinary persecution, and rose to the bad pre-eminence by cruel tortures and frightful massacres

Negotia-
tions
broken off.

which has made his name so infamous. He excused himself for these atrocities to the Protestant princes of Germany by saying that the victims who had perished at the stake by a slow process of burning, devised to increase their sufferings, were “only *Sacramentarians*.”

Great jealousy apparently was felt at the English court on hearing of the invitation given by Francis I. to Melancthon. A special embassy was sent to intercept the Saxon reformer, on the supposition that he was about to proceed to France, with the following instructions:—

Jealousy of
the English
court.

Invitation
of Melanc-
thon to
England.

“First, his Grace’s pleasure is, that ye shall immediately (upon the receipt hereof) despatch Barnes in post, with Deryk in his company, into Germany, commanding him to use such diligence in his journey that he may, and it be possible, meet with Melancthon before his arrival in France; and in case he shall so meet with him, not only to dissuade his going thither, declaring how extremely the French kingdom persecute those that will not grant unto the Bishop of Rome his power and jurisdiction; using in this part all persuasions, reasons, and means that he can devise, to empech and let his said journey thither; laying unto him how much it should be to his shame and reproach, to vary and go from that true opinion wherein he hath so long continued; but also on the other side, to persuade him all that he may, to convert his said journey hither, showing as well the conformity of his opinions and doctrine here, as the nobility and virtues of the king’s majesty, with the good entertainments which undoubtedly he shall have here at his Grace’s hands.

“And if percase the said Barnes shall not meet with him before his arrival in France, then the said Barnes proceeding himself forth in his journey towards the princes of Germany, shall (with all diligence) return into the king’s highness, the said Deryk, with advertisement of the said Melancthon’s coming into France, and such other occurrents as he shall then know. And if the said Deryk be not now ready to go with him, the king’s

pleasure is, ye shall in his stead appoint and send such one other with the said Barnes, as ye shall think meet for that purpose. And when the said Barnes shall arrive with the said princes of Germany, the king's pleasure is, he shall (on his Grace's behalf) as well persuade them to persist and continue in their former good opinion, concerning the denial of the Bishop of Rome's usurped authority, declaring their own honour, reputation, and surety, to depend thereupon. And that they now may better maintain their said just opinion therein than ever they might, having the king's majesty (one of the most noble and puissant princes of the world) of like opinion and judgment with them who having proceeded therein by great advice and judgments (of the most part) of the great and famous clerks in Christendom, will in no wise relent, vary, or alter in that behalf. Like as the said Barnes may declare and show unto them by a book made by a dean of the chapel, and as many of the bishop's sermons as you have, which book ye shall receive herewith the copy whereof, and of the said sermons, ye must deliver unto the said Barnes, at his departure, for his better remembrance and instruction. Furthermore, the king's pleasure is, ye shall upon the receipt hereof, immediately cause Mr. Haynes and Christopher Mount, in post to repair unto France to Sir John Wallop, in as secret a manner as they can; as coming like his friend to visit him, and not as sent by the king. And in case they shall (by him or otherwise) learn and know that Melancthon is there arrived, then his Grace will, that the said Haynes and Mount shall, in such sort as they be not much noted resort unto him; and for the dissuading of his continuance there, or the alteration of his opinion and the alluring of him hither, to use such reasons and persuasions as be before written, with such other as they can further devise for that purpose.

"In that behalf, and to make an end, his Grace will in no wise that Barnes or Haynes, shall tarry for any further instruction of the Bishop of Canterbury, or any other, having his Grace determined to send the same after, by Mr. Almoner and Hethe; but he, Mr. Haynes and Mount, shall with all possible diligence depart immediately in post, without longer tarrying, than for this their despatch shall be necessary, so as their abode empeche not the king's purpose touching the said Melancthon, and thus fare you most heartily well.

"From Langley in much haste, this Monday at four of the clock at afternoon."*

Haynes and Mount left England, August 1st, 1535, and wrote from Rheims, August 8th, to say that Melancthon was not in France, nor likely to come.† Other communications passed between the king and Melancthon on the subject of his visit, but chiefly complimentary, and of little or no importance.

These communications with the Continental reformers, and the dissemination of their books in England, caused great uneasiness to the Uneasiness of the Romish party in England. Romish party. The clergy of the Lower House of Convocation, whilst anxious to avoid giving offence to the king, offered their "protestation" against errors which they enumerate in a long catalogue. The following, in particular, probably caused them most alarm:—

"That all ceremonies accustomed in the Church, which are not clearly expressed in Scripture, must be taken away, because they are men's inventions.

"That it is preached and taught that the Church (that is commonly taken for the church) is the old synagogue, and that *the Church is the congregation of good men only*. The Church hath no official members besides those of bishops and deacons.

"That by preaching the people have been brought in opinion and belief that nothing is to be believed except it can be proved expressly by Scripture."

The clergy importuned the king to interpose to prevent the further spread of opinions of this kind, as injurious to the Church and dangerous to the State. To "set quietness" in the people a proclamation was made, that at the end of the next Parliament, a "great standing

Standing council appointed.

* Cleop. E. vi. fol. 330.

† State Papers, vol. vii. p. 622.

council" should be appointed; "the said council to have authority to inquire by whom and by what occasion the noise that there should be so many heresies in this realm as are noised to be ariseth; but it is not the intent of the king nor of his parliament that the said council should accuse or attaint any man before them of heresy; but that they may examine such as complaint shall be made on that behalf, and these examinations to be only to this intent to let all men know those that will hold any opinions contrary to that said council."

In conformity with a royal proclamation, a Convocation met to settle the form of doctrine and discipline for the Church. Latimer preached two sermons on the occasion on the "Children of Light."

"The end of your convocation," the preacher said, "shall show what ye have done; the fruit that shall come of your consultation shall show what generation ye be of. For what have ye done hitherto, I pray you, these seven years and more? What fruit is come of your long and great assembly? What one thing that the people of England hath been the better of a hair; or you yourselves either more accepted before God, or better discharged toward the people committed under your care? Ye have oft sat in consultation, but what have ye done? Ye have had many things in deliberation, but what one is put forth whereby either Christ is more glorified, or else Christ's people made more holy? I appeal to your own conscience. How chanced this? How came it thus? Because there were no children of light, no children of God amongst you, which, setting the world at nought, would study to illustrate the glory of God, and thereby show themselves children of light? I think not so. Then why happened this? Why, I pray you? Perchance, either because the children of the world were more in number in this your congregation, as it oft happeneth, or at the least of more policy than the children of light in their generation; whereby it might very

Latimer's
sermon.

soon be brought to pass that these were much stronger in gendering the evil than these in producing the good.

"Go ye to, good brethren and fathers, for the love of God go ye to; and seeing we are here assembled, let us do something whereby we may be known to be the children of light."

Ales (Alesius) was in London at this time, having been sent by Melancthon to present to the king a copy of his *Loci Theologici*. We learn from him as an eye-witness what passed in the meetings of the convocation. In a letter to Queen Elizabeth at a subsequent time, he says:—

"I am persuaded that the true and chief cause of the hatred, the treachery, and the false accusations laid to the charge of that most holy queen, your pious mother, was this, that she permitted the king to send an embassy into Germany to the princes who had embraced the gospel.

Account
given of
the Convo-
cation by
Ales.

"I myself in some sort was the occasion of this embassy, having been the bearer of the *Loci Theologici* of Philip Melancthon, which that very learned man sent to the most serene king your father, and had, moreover, induced him to dedicate that book to the king's majesty.

"I was also asked by the king whether I thought Philip would come into England if his majesty invited him, and I answered that I had very little doubt as to his inclination to do so could he obtain the permission of John Frederic, Duke of Saxony."*

This permission was withheld from want of confidence in Henry VIII., and it devolved on Ales to represent the views of Melancthon.

"I did meet by chance," he tells us, "in the street the right excellent Lord Cromwell, going unto the Parliament House. When he saw me he called me with him to the Parliament House to Westminster, where we found all the bishops gathered together, unto whom as he went and took me with him all the bishops and prelates did rise up and did obeisance unto him as to their vicar-general, and after he had saluted them he sat him

* R. O. MSS.

down in the highest place, and right against him sat the Archbishop of Canterbury, after him the Archbishop of York, and then London, Lincoln, Salisbury, Bath, Ely, Hereford, Chichester, Norwich, Rochester, and Worcester, and certain others whose names I have forgotten. All these did sit at a table covered with a carpet, with certain priests standing about them.

“Then the Lord Cromwell, being vicar-general of the realm, lord of the privy seal, and chief councillor unto the king, turned himself to the bishops, and said: ‘Right reverend fathers in Christ, the king’s majesty giveth you high thanks that we have so diligently, without any excuse, assembled hither according to his commandment. And ye be not ignorant that ye be called hither to determine certain controversies which at this time be moved concerning the Christian religion and faith, not only in this realm, but also in all nations through the world, for the king studieth day and night to set a quietness in the Church, and he cannot rest until all such controversies be fully debated and ended through the determination of you and of his whole parliament. For although his special desire is to set a stay for the unlearned people, whose consciences are in doubt what they may believe, and he himself, by his excellent learning, knoweth these controversies well enough; yet he will suffer no common alteration, but by the consent of you and of his whole parliament. By the which ye may preserve both his high wisdom and also his great love toward you; and he desireth now for Christ’s sake that all malice, obstinacy, and carnal respect set apart, ye will friendly and lovingly dispute among yourselves of the controversies moved in the Church, and that ye will conclude all things by the Word of God, without all brawling or scolding; neither will his majesty suffer the Scriptures to be wrested or defaced by any glosses, any papistical laws, or by any authority of doctors or counsels; and much less will he admit any articles or doctrine not contained in the Scripture, but approved only by continuance of time, and old custom, and by unwritten verities, as ye were wont to do. Ye know well enough that ye be bound to show this service to Christ and to his Church, and yet notwithstanding, his majesty will give you high thanks if ye will set and conclude a godly and perfect unity, whereunto this is the only way and mean if ye will determine all things by the Scripture, as God commandeth you in Deuteronomy, which thing his majesty exhorteth and desireth you.’

“When the Lord Cromwell had spoken his mind after this sort with high gravity (as he was a man of great wit), of excellent wisdom, and of godly eloquence, all the bishops did rise up and give thanks to the king’s majesty for his fervent study and desire towards a unity, and for this virtuous exhortation most worthy of a Christian king. After this began they to dispute of the sacraments—the Bishop of London on one side, with the Archbishop of York, Bath, Chichester, and Norwich; the Archbishop of Canterbury on the other side, supported by Salisbury, Ely, Hereford, Worcester, and certain other.” The Archbishop of Canterbury, in the course of his speech, said, ‘It beseemeth not men of learning and gravity to make such babbling and brawling about bare words, so that we agree in the substance and effect of the matter.’

“This exhortation,” continues Ales, “did the archbishop make most soberly and discreetly, as he is a man of singular gravity, with such sweetness that it did my heart good to hear him. I did signify, by some token of my countenance, that this admonition of the archbishop did please and delight me excellently well. The Lord Cromwell bade me speak what I thought of this disputation; but he told the bishops before that I was the king’s scholar, and therefore he desired them to be content to hear me indifferently. Then I, after the rude manner of the schools than after any courtly solemnity, bowing my knees for a token of courtesy, as it became me, begged to speak. ‘I think that my lord archbishop hath given you a profitable exhortation, that ye should first agree of the signification of a sacrament,’ said Ales, and proceeding to discuss the question, he maintained that there were only *two* sacraments, and not *seven*; and that these were ‘Baptism and the Supper of the Lord.’ ‘The Bishop of London could scarcely suffer me to speak.’ ‘What Ales says is all false,’ he said. Then I answered that I would prove all that I had said to be true, not only by the Scriptures, but by the old doctors, and by the school-writers also. ‘Brother Alexander (Ales),’ said the Bishop of Hereford, ‘contend not much with him about the minds and sayings of the doctors and school-writers, for ye know that they in many places do differ among themselves, and that they are contrary to themselves almost in every article; and there is no hope of any concord to be made if we must lean to their judgments in these matters of controversy, and we are commanded by the king’s

Grace to dispute by the Holy Scripture.' Turning to the bishops, he made a short and pithy oration. 'Think not,' said he, 'that we can, by any sophistical subtleties, steal out of the world again the light which every man doth see. Christ hath so lightened the world at this time, that the light of the gospel hath put to flight all misty darkness, and it will shortly have the higher hand of all clouds, though we resist in vain never so much. *The lay people do now know the Holy Scriptures better than many of us*, and the Germans have made the text of the Bible so plain and easy by the Hebrew and Greek tongue, that now many things may be better understood, without any glosses at all, than by all the commentaries of the doctors. And, moreover, they have so opened these controversies by their writings, that women and children may wonder at the blindness and falsehood that hath been hitherto. Wherefore, ye must consider earnestly what ye will determine of these controversies, that ye make not yourselves to be mocked and laughed to scorn of all the world, and that ye bring them not to have this opinion of you, to think evermore that ye have neither spark of learning nor of godliness in you; and thus shall ye lose all your estimation and authority with them which before took you for learned men, and profitable ministers unto the commonwealth of Christendom. For that which you do harp upon, that there was never heresy in the church so great but that process of time, with the power and authority of the Pope, hath quenched it, it is nothing to the purpose. Think this surely, that there is nothing so feeble and weak (so that it be true) but it shall find place, and be able to stand against all falsehood. Truth is the daughter of time, and time is the mother of truth; and whatsoever is besieged of truth cannot long continue. And upon whose side truth doth stand that ought not to be thought transitory, or that it will ever fall. Truth is of so great power, and strength, and efficacy that she could neither be defended with words, nor be overcome with any strength, but after she hath hidden herself long, at length she putteth up her head and appeareth."

Encouraged by this "oration," Ales resumed his argument with more freedom, and contended that—

“Sacraments be signs or ceremonies which make us certain and sure of the will of God ; but no man’s heart can be certain and sure of the will of God without the Word of God. Wherefore it followeth that there be no sacraments without the Word of God : and such as cannot be proved out of the Holy Scripture ought not to be called sacraments. The Bishop of London did interrupt me and said, ‘ Let us grant that the sacraments may be gathered out of the Word of God ; yet are you far deceived if ye think that there is none other Word of God but that which every sowter and cobbler do read in their mother tongue ; and if ye think that nothing pertaineth unto the Christian faith than that only that is written in the Bible.’ When the right noble Lord Cromwell, the archbishop, with the other bishops, which did defend the pure doctrine of the gospel heard this, they smiled a little, one upon another, forasmuch as they saw him flee in the very beginning of the disputation unto his old musty sophistry and unwritten verities. And I would have disputed further with the bishop, but the Lord Cromwell bade me be content, for the time began to go away, and it was twelve of the clock.

“The next day, when the bishops were assembled again, and I was present with the Lord Cromwell, there came unto me a certain archdeacon in the name of the Archbishop of Canterbury, which told me that the other bishops were grievously offended with me that I, being a stranger, should be admitted unto their disputation, which thing, when I had shown unto the Lord Cromwell, he thought it best to give place unto the bishops, specially because he would not procure me their hatred ; for he knew well, that if they had once conceived in their hearts any malice against any man they would never cease until they had gotten him out of the way.”

In connection with the convocation, A DECLARATION WAS SIGNED BY CROMWELL, THE TWO ARCHBISHOPS, ELEVEN BISHOPS, AND TWENTY DIVINES AND CANONISTS, THAT CONCEDES THE ENTIRE QUESTION AS TO THE EQUALITY OF CHRISTIAN MINISTERS ACCORDING TO THE NEW TESTAMENT. It is entitled, “*A Declaration made of the functions and Divine Institution of Bishops and*

Priests," and contains the following explicit and remarkable statement.

"It was also ordeyned and commanded by the appostles, that the same sacrament be applied and mynnystred by the bishops, from tyme to tyme, unto suche other persones as had the qualities which the appostles discrybe, as it appeareth evidently in the thirddde chapitre of the first Epistle of Saint Paul to Timothe, and his first chapitre of his Epistle unto Titus, and surely this is the hole vertue and efficcacie, and the cause also of the institution of this sacrament as it is founde in the *New Testament*, for albeit, tholye fathers of the Church, which succeeded the appostles, myndyng to beautifie and ornate the Church of Christ withal those things which wer commendable in the *temple of the Jews*, did devise not onely certain other ceremonies, then be before rehersed, as Tonsures, Rasures, Unctions, and such other observances to be used in the administration of the said sacraments, but did also institute certain inferior orders or degrees, as Janitors, Lectors, Exorcestes, Acolites, and Sub-deacons, and deputed to every one of those certain officers, to execute in the church wherein *thei followed*, "*undoubtedly, the example and rites used in the Old Testament, yet the trouthe is yt in the New Testament ther is no mention made of any degrees or distinctions in orders, but only deacons, or mynysters, and of priests, or bishopps, nor is ther any worde spokyn of any other ceremony used in the conferring of this sacrament, but only of praier, and the imposition of the bishopps's handes.*"*

Thomas Cromwell, T. Cantuarien, Evardus Ebor, Joannes

* Cotton, Cleop. E. 5, pp. 50, 51.

London, Cuthbertus Dunelmensis, Joannes Lincoln, Joannes Bathoniens, Richard Cicestr, Thomas Elien, Joannes Bangor, Nicolaus Sarum, Edvardus Hererfoden, Hugo Wygorn, Joannes Roffen, Simon Matthew, Richardus Wolman, Joannes Prynn, Joannes Bell, Gulielmus Buckmastre, Willielmus Cliffe, Willielmus Maye, Robertus Aldrydge, Nicolaus Wotton, Gilfridus Downes, Richardus Cox, Joannes Skip, Joannes Redman, Cuthbertus Marshall, Thomas Robertson, Marmaduke Waldeby, Thomas Baret, Robertus Oking, Joannes Nase, Nicolaus Heyth, Joannes Barbar, Rodolphus Bradford, Richardus Smith, etc."

This list of signatures includes those of Cranmer, Fox, Lee, Tunstall, and Latimer.

The Convocation could not agree on a platform of doctrine. The king, therefore, in the plenitude of his power, sent down a document which all were required to subscribe, entitled, "Articles devised by the King's Highness' Majesty to establish quietness and unity among us, and to avoid contentious opinions."

The people were instructed to believe the whole Bible, but to interpret all things according to the three creeds—the Apostles', the Nicene, and the Athanasian—that baptism was instituted by Christ for the remission of sins, without which, none could attain to everlasting life. Penance was enjoined as necessary to salvation—to consist of contrition, confession, and amendment of life. In the sacrament of the altar, under the forms of bread and wine, it was to be taught that there was truly and substantially given the very same body of Christ that was born of the Virgin; images were to be used to stir up devotion; but the worship itself was to be offered to God, not to the image. It was declared good to pray to saints, to pray for and with us; ceremonies were to be continued with

their mystical significations, and prayers for souls in purgation; but since the effect of such prayers was somewhat uncertain, no money was to be paid for them.

An overture from the Pope for a general council to be held at Mantua was peremptorily rejected by the convocation. Henry VIII., in reply to the summons, said:—

“England hath taken her leave of the Pope’s crafts for ever, never more to be deluded with them. Roman bishops have nothing to do with the English people. The one doth not traffic with the other, at least though they have to do with us. We will have none of their merchandise, none of their stuff. We will from henceforth ask counsel of him and his when we wish to be deceived, when we covet to be in error, and when we desire to offend God, truth, and honesty.”

The Pope
renounced
by Henry
VIII.

Slight, comparatively, as was the ecclesiastical change effected by Henry VIII. in concurrence with convocation, the party opposed to reformation stirred up violent opposition. A formidable outbreak occurred in the north of England under the leadership of Aske, called the Pilgrimage of Grace. Priests marched before the people with crosses in their hands. On their banners they had a crucifix, with the five wounds and a chalice, and every one wore on his sleeve, as the badge of the party, an emblem of the five wounds of Christ, with the name of Jesus in their midst. All that joined them took an oath “that they entered into this Pilgrimage of Grace for the love of God, the preservation of the king’s person and issue, the purifying the nobility, and driving away all ill-born, and base-born, and ill councillors, and for no particular profit of their own; not to kill any for envy, but to

Insurrec-
tion in the
north.

take up before them the cross of Christ, the restitution of his Church, and the suppression of heretics and their opinions." In their petition they state:—

"Touching our faith, we would have the heresies of Luther, Wickliffe, Huss, Melancthon, Œcolampadius, Bucer's "*Confessio Germanica*," "*Apologia Melancthonius*," the works of Tyndale, Raskall, St. Germain, and such other heresies of Anabaptists to be annihilated and destroyed."

Notwithstanding these untoward appearances, negotiations were resumed by the continental reformers. In 1538, affairs in Germany were so unsettled, that the Protestant princes were induced to send an embassy to

Reformers
renew their
negotia-
tions, 1538.

England with a twofold object—to form an armed league against the Pope, and to settle the terms of a common confession of faith. The members of the legation were Francis Burgrat, chancellor to the Elector of Saxony; George à Boyneburg, one of the nobles of Hesse; and Francis Myconius, superintendent of the reformed church at Gotha. They represented John Frederick, Elector of Saxony, and Philip, landgrave of Hesse. The vice-chancellor was charged with a letter to the king from Melancthon, in which he says:—

"Private men very much need the aid of distinguished princes and states, and your majesty has excited the greatest hopes in every country, that you would promote the wishes of the pious for the reformation of the churches. What else does the papal faction aim at than the total extinction of divine truth, and the infliction of the most barbarous cruelties upon kings, princes, and nations, and the support of the Catholic abuses, by a system of boundless tyranny in the church? Such

Message
of Henry
VIII. from
Melan-
cthon.

being the dangerous situation of her affairs, I will not cease to exhort and implore your majesty to pay attention to the circumstances of the *Christian Church, now a suppliant at your feet*, to promote some firm and desirable union, and to dissuade other princes from connecting themselves with Popish counsels. This is an affair of the greatest importance, and therefore worthy the attention of a king so superior to others in learning and wisdom.”*

The king welcomed the delegation, and rejoiced in the opportunity to display his theological ability. Various points were discussed, and there was some faint hope that both parties might consent to the Augsburg confession; but the death of Fox, Bishop of Hereford, greatly diminished the influence of the reformers, and no progress was made by them. With this decline of interest in their cause, they suffered great neglect.

Cranmer, writing to Cromwell, August 23rd, 1538, says:—

“When that the orators of Germany, whom they granted to tarry one month, required that we should go forth in their book and entreat of the abuses, so that the same might be set forth in writing as the other articles are, I have since effectuously moved the bishops thereto, but they have made me this answer, that they know that the king's grace hath taken upon himself to answer the said orators in that behalf; and therefore they will not meddle with the abuses, lest they should write therein contrary to that the king shall write. Wherefore they have required me to entreat now of the sacraments of matrimony, orders, confirmation, and extreme unction, wherein they know certainly that the Germans will not agree with us, except it be in matrimony only.

“So that I perceive that that *the bishops seek only an occasion to break the concord*, assuring your lordship that nothing shall

* Cotton MSS. Cleop. E. 6.

be done unless the king's special commandment be unto us therein directed; for they manifestly see that they cannot defend the abuses, and yet they would in no wise grant unto them.

"Further, as concerning the orators of Germany I am advertised that they are very evil lodged where they be; for besides the multitude of rats daily and nightly running in their chambers, which is no small disquietness, the kitchen standeth directly against their parlour, where they daily dine and sup, and by reason thereof the house savoureth so ill, that it offendeth all men that come into it. Therefore, if your lordship do but offer them a more commodious house to demore in, I doubt not but that they will accept your offer most thankfully, albeit I am sure that they will not remove for this time."*

Melancthon continued to urge the king to extend his royal patronage to the cause of Christ. Writing from Frankfort, March 26th, 1539, he says:—

"I commend the cause of the Christian religion to your majesty's attention, for your majesty knows that the most important duty of great princes is to regard and promote heavenly truth, on which God associates them with Himself in the office of ruling. I am desirous, as I have written before, that a union upon the basis of doctrinal agreement should be effected amongst the churches which reject the domination of Rome. This would tend to promote the glory of God, and conduce to general tranquillity. Your majesty has happily begun the removal of some superstitious practices; I entreat you to proceed to others. The intention of our adversaries is apparent, but they can never suppress our doctrine; God himself will be the keeper of our states and princes. They are always most anxious for public peace and tranquillity; but if our enemies resort to arms, the princes will not be wanting in their duty. I will not cease, therefore, to exhort your majesty to persevere in promoting the cause of the Christian Church, and in resisting the tyranny and violence of its adversaries."†

Letter of
Melancthon
to Henry
VIII., 1539.

A re-action set in strongly against Cranmer and

* Cleop. E. v., fol. 212, art. 225.

† Cotton MSS., Cleop. E. 5.

Cromwell. Bonner was installed in the place of Fox to gain rapid promotion on the episcopal bench. Under the influence of his party, the king insisted on the preparation of a new basis of ecclesiastical agreement. After much discussion, Cranmer was outvoted, and parliament sanctioned the "six articles," which cut off all hope of further reformation:—

"1. That in the sacrament of the altar, after the consecration, there remained no substance of bread and wine; but under these forms the natural body and blood of Christ were present.

Six
articles.

"2. That communion in both kinds was necessary to salvation to all persons by the law of God; but that both the flesh and blood of Christ were together in each of the kinds.

"3. That priests, after the order of priesthood, might not marry by the law of God.

"4. That vows of chastity ought to be observed by the laws of God.

"5. That the use of private masses ought to be continued, which, as it was agreeable to God's law, so man received great benefit from them.

"6. That auricular confession was expedient and necessary, and ought to be retained.

"It was further enacted 'that if any did speak, preach, or write against the first article, they were to be judged heretics, and to be burned without any abjuration, and to forfeit their real and personal estates to the king; and those who obstinately disputed against the other articles were to be adjudged felons, and to suffer death as felons without benefit of clergy; and those who, either in word or writing, spake against them, were to be prisoners during the king's pleasure, and forfeit their goods and chattels to the king for the first offence: and if they offended the second time, they were to suffer as felons.'

At the passing of this act, Latimer and Shaxton resigned their bishoprics, and Cranmer, taking alarm,

sent his wife to her friends in Germany. Latimer was soon after thrown into prison. Maillac, writing to Francis I., 1539, says "the bishops have had a grand struggle. Part desired to retain the mass complete, part to have a new service. The majority were the Conservatives, who have carried the day. The king, as the leader of this party, said all which ought to have been said. He maintained that the holy sacrament ought to be believed and adored, and to be honoured with the ceremonies to be observed from immemorial time. Evil speaking, therefore, against the sacraments is prohibited under pain of death, and priests are forbidden to marry."

Maillac writes to the Constable, June, 1539 :—
 "The king's declaration about the sacrament has given wide pleasure and satisfaction; the people in general are inclined to the old religion, and only a few bishops support the new opinions. These bishops are in a bad humour."

The position of Latimer, and others of kindred views, must have been as trying as it was inconsistent. A continual strain was put on them in conscience, in their vain attempts to meet the demands of the king. The preparation of the service-book was extremely galling. Latimer, writing to Cromwell, says :—

"This day, syr, wych ys Saturday, we hade finished (I trow) the rest of our book, if my Lord of Harford had not been diseased, to whom surely we owe great thanks for his great diligence in all our proceedings. Upon Monday (I think) it will be done altogether, and then my Lord of Canterbury will send it unto your lordship with all speed; to whom also, if anything be praiseworthy, *bona pars laudis optimo jure debetur*. As for myself, I can nothing

Trying
position of
Latimer.

else but pray God, when it is done, it will be well and sufficiently done, so that we shall not need to have any more such doings, for verily, for my part, I had lever be poor parson of poor Kynton again than to continue thus Bishop of Worcester." *

Disappointed in the course of the king, Melancthon wrote to him again at great length. In the tone of remonstrance, he says in this epistle :†—

"Many pious and learned men in Germany have indulged the hope that your majesty's authority would have produced a considerable alteration in the conduct of other kings, and that the German princes in particular might have been influenced to relinquish the unworthy cruelty of their proceedings, and deliberate on the correction of abuses. You were hailed as the promoter and leader of this most holy and illustrious design. Now, alas! your prejudices have wounded our minds most deeply, the animosity of other princes is confirmed, the vexatious obstinacy of the impious is increased, and the ancient errors are strengthened. The bishops, no doubt, contend that they do not maintain errors, but true doctrines and a divine right; and though by no means ignorant that they are in fact opposed to the divine authority and the apostolical constitution of the Church, yet men will find out very fine interpretations, *σοφα φαρμακα*, *artful poisons*, as Euripides calls them, when policy requires it, in order to furnish a pretext for their errors. I am not surprised that multitudes are deluded by these fallacies; and though you are neither deficient in erudition nor in judgment, yet even wise men are sometimes diverted from the truth by specious arguments.

Remonstrance of Melancthon with Henry VIII.

"It cannot be denied that the Church of Christ was for a long period veiled in tremendous darkness. Human traditions, the torment of pious minds, were most shamefully introduced to the utter corruption of divine worship. Vows, gifts, vestments, meats and drinks, a vain repetition of prayers, indulgences, and the worship of images, with every species of manifest idolatry, being substituted for the true service of God, exhibited a striking resemblance between the religion of heathens and of Rome. The

* State Papers i. p. 553.

† Melancth. Ep. lib. i. 28.

real doctrines of repentance and forgiveness of sin through faith in Jesus Christ, justification by faith, the distinction of law and gospel, and the use of the sacraments were unknown.

"The keys of authority were given into the hands of the Pope to support his tyranny, both in civil and ecclesiastical affairs. The law of celibacy produced licentiousness of manners, but God has, in some measure, dispersed the darkness by the reformed doctrine; for *this light of truth which now shines in the churches, must be attributed to Him, because no human skill could have removed the prevailing errors.* The Spirit of God has predicted that in the last times a violent contention would arise between the saints and Antichrist, and that Antichrist supported by bishops, deceivers, and princes, would oppose the truth and slay the pious. These very things are, at this moment, transacted. The tyranny of the Romish hierarchy has partly introduced and partly confirmed the existing abuses, and as Daniel predicted, 'his look is more stout than his fellows,' Dan. vii. 20. We rejoiced in the separation of your majesty, and hoped that the English Church would flourish again; but alas! your bishops still adhere to Antichrist in all his idolatries and errors. The articles they have published are most craftily selected, and support every human tradition, especially vows, celibacy, and confession. In retaining the doctrine of private masses, they not only confirm priestly domination, but every dangerous error of Popery, artfully avoiding improvement that their dignity and wealth may be secure. That this is the work of the bishops is obvious; it speaks for itself.

"I implore you, by our Lord Jesus Christ, to mitigate and amend this episcopal decree, by doing which you will both consult the glory of Christ and the welfare of all your churches. May you regard the ardent desires of the pious throughout the world; that kings would use their influence to effect a reformation of the Church, to remove unauthorized services, and to propagate evangelical truth. May you consider those holy persons who are in bonds for the gospel, and are the true members of Christ; for if this decree be not cancelled the bishops will practise their severities to an incalculable extent. Satan himself can alone inspire this opposition to Christ; they minister to his rage; he impels them to those cruel

massacres. All good men entreat and implore you not to listen to the impious, the cruel sentiments, and sophistical cavils in circulation against us; but to regard our just and well-found petition. In doing this, you will secure, no doubt, a great and a divine reward, as well as the highest degree of celebrity amongst all Christians. Jesus Christ himself will judge of the conduct of men to his Church, and while human language exists, these transactions will be transmitted to all future ages. If our churches be indeed the Churches of Christ, and we seek His glory, the cause will never want patrons and protectors who will bestow due praises on the deserving, and merited contempt on the persecutor. Hungry, thirsty, naked, bound, Christ himself complains of the fury of the Roman hierarchy, and the iniquitous severities practised by many kings and princes. He entreats for the wounded members of his body that his true Church may be defended and the gospel honoured. To acknowledge, to entertain, and to minister to Him, is the duty of a pious king, and a most grateful service to God."

These faithful admonitions and earnest entreaties were lost upon the self-willed and impetuous monarch. The one doctrine to which he held most firmly was that of the royal supremacy, and this he strenuously maintained against all interference of the Pope or his emissaries. In this policy he was vigorously helped by his vicegerent Cromwell. Wolsey had suppressed some of the minor monasteries because of their notorious abuses; but it was determined now to have a general raid in the form of a "visitation." The abominations practised by monks and nuns furnished the occasion for dismantling the religious houses, well known to be the inland garrisons of a foreign foe; dangerous, because of his subtle and secret influence through the confessional, and with whom no terms of peace could be made from his systematic duplicity.

Though not in exact chronological order, we

have reserved, to this point, for the sake of a more distinct view, an outline of the reports furnished by the commissioners. The preamble of the Act of Parliament for dissolving the lesser monasteries sets forth, almost in the form of a national indictment, the iniquities practised in them :—

“Forasmuch as manifest sin, vicious, carnal, and abominable living is daily used, and committed commonly in such little and small abbies and priories, and in other religious houses of monks, canons and nuns, where the congregation of such religious persons is under the number of twelve persons; whereby the governors of such religious houses, and their convents, spoil, destroy, consume, and utterly waste, as well as these churches, monasteries, priories, principal houses, farms, granges, and tenements, and hereditaments, as the ornaments of their churches, and their goods and chattels, to the high displeasure of God, slander of good religion, and to the great infamy of the king’s highness’ realm if redress should not be had thereof. And albeit, that *many continual visitations hath been heretofore had, by the space of two hundred years and more, for a charitable reformation* of such unthrifty, carnal, abominable living. Yet, nevertheless, little or none amendment is hitherto had; but their vicious livings shamefully increaseth and augmenteth, and by a cursed custom, so grown and infested, that a great multitude of the religious persons in such small houses, do rather choose to rove abroad in apostacy, than to conform themselves to the observation of good religion; so that, without such small houses be utterly suppressed, and the religious persons therein committed to great and honourable monasteries of religion in this realm, where they may be compelled to live religiously, for reformation of their lives, there can else be no redress, nor reformation in that behalf.

“In consideration whereof the king’s most royal majesty, being supreme head on earth, under God, of the Church of England, daily studying and devising its increase, advancement, and exaltation of true doctrine and virtue in the said Church, not to the only glory and honour of God, and the total extirping

and destruction of vice and sin; having knowledge that the premises be true, as well by complaints of the late visitations as by sundry credible informations: considering, also, that divers and great solemn monasteries of this realm, wherein, thanks be to God, religion is well kept and observed, be destitute of such full numbers of religious persons as they might keep, his majesty thought good that a plain declaration should be made of the premises, as well to the Lords spiritual and temporal, as to others his loving subjects, the Commons, in the present Parliament assembled. Whereupon the said Lords and Commons, by a great deliberation, finally be resolved, that it is and shall be much more to the pleasure of Almighty God, and for the honour of the realm, that the possessions of such small houses now being spent, spoiled, and wasted for increase and maintenance of sin, should be used and converted to better uses, and the unthrifty religious persons so spending the same to be compelled to reform their lives: and thereupon must humbly desire the king's highness that it may be enacted, by the authority of this present Parliament, that his majesty shall have and enjoy to him and his heirs for ever, all and singular such monasteries."

The monks of the CHARTERHOUSE were among the first to come under visitation. A considerable number of the monks refused to acknowledge the king's supremacy, and were put to death. John Houghton, the prior, was executed on the 27th of April, 1535. Two others, William Exmewe and Sebastian Newdegate, suffered on the 18th of June following; and Richard Bere, John Davy, Thomas Johnson, Thomas Green, Thomas Shryne, Walter Pierson, Robert Salt, Thomas Redyng, and William Horn were executed on the 4th of August. The gibbet failed to produce conviction in the minds of the survivors. Bedyll, one of the commissioners appointed to visit the monasteries, writing to Cromwell from "Aldersgate Street, this morning of Ascension-Day," says:—

Monks of
the Charterhouse
executed.

“I repaired to the Charterhouse, and had with me divers books and annotations, both of mine own against the primacy of the Bishop of Rome, and also of St. Peter, declaring evidently the equality of the apostles by the law of God. And, after long communication more than one hour and a half with the vicar and procurator of the house, I left those books and annotations with them, that they should see the Holy Scriptures and doctors thereupon concerning the said matters, and thereupon reform themselves accordingly. And yesterday they sent me the said books and annotations again home to my house by a servant of theirs, without any word or writing. Wherefore I sent to the procurator to come and speak with me, seeing I kept my bed by reason of sickness, and could not come to him. And, at his coming, I demanded of him whether he and the vicar, and others of the seniors, had seen or heard the said annotations, or perused the titles of the books making most for the said matters? And he answered that the vicar and he and Newdegate had spent the time upon them till nine or ten of the clock at night, and that they saw nothing in them whereby they were moved to alter their opinion. I then declared to him the danger of his opinions, which was like to be the destruction of them and their house for ever; and, as far as I could perceive by my communication with the vicar and procurator on Tuesday, and with the procurator yesterday, they be obstinately determined to suffer all extremities rather than to alter their opinion—regarding no more the death of their ‘Father’ in word or countenance than he were living and conversant among them. I also demanded of the procurator whether the residue of his brethren were of like opinion? and he answered he was not sure—but he thought that they were all of one mind.”*

They seem to have continued in this state of unanimity, though the prior ultimately surrendered, as Bedyll reports in a subsequent letter to Cromwell:—

“It shall please, your lordship, to understand that the monks of the Charterhouse, here at London, which were committed to Newgate for their traitorous behaviour long time continued against the king’s grace, be almost dispatched by the

* Cotton MSS., Cleop. E. vi. fol. 252.

hand of God, as it may appear to you by this bill inclosed whereof, considering their behaviour, and the whole matter, *I am not sorry*, but would that all such as love not the king's highness, and his worldly honour, were in the like case. My lord (as ye may), I desire you in the way of charity, and none otherwise, to be good lord to the prior of the said Charterhouse, which is as honest a man as ever was in that habit (or else I am much deceived) and is one which never offended the king's grace by disobedience of his laws, but hath laboured very sore continually for the reformation of his brethren, and now at the last, at mine exhortation and instigation, constantly moved and finally persuaded his brethren to surrender their house, lands, and goods, into the king's hands, and to trust only to his mercy and grace."

Archbishop Lee, in a letter dated from Cawod, the 24th of January, in answer to complaints, assures the king of his diligence and zeal:—

"Most humbly prostrate, I beseech your highness, to take me and not to conceive for this surmise any displeasure against me, which should be deadly discomfort; ne to have 'anie oodre' opinion of suspicion of me, ne to open your ears to any such complaints."

In proof of his fidelity, he writes to inform his majesty of the pains he had taken to bring them into order:—

"'Right Honourable,'—by my chaplain, Mr. Braynesbie, I advertised you, what hath been done here for the advancement of such things as the king's highness hath commanded; and now I send to you, by this bearer, two books, one which comprised articles which every curate and all other ecclesiastical parsons shall extend and furnish as his learning will serve. Another book I have conceived, of brief declaration to the people, as well of the king's style and title of supreme head, as also that the Bishop of Rome hath no jurisdiction in this realm by the law of God; which declaration shall be spread abroad, that all curates and other that can *perceive* it and utter it may at least read it to their audience.

"Doubtless many of our curates can scant perceive it. Many benefices be so exile of 4 li., 5 li., and 7 li., that no learned man will take them ; and, therefore, we be fain to take such as be presented, so they be of honest conversation, and can competently understand that they read, and minister sacramentalls, observing the due form and rites, although 'oodrewies' they bee not perfecte, but must resorte for counsaile.

"And in all my diocese I do not know secular priests that can preach, any number necessary for such a diocese, truly not twelve ; and they that have the best benefices be not resident, which thing considered, I trust the king's highness will be content, if I do what the best that I can do. I write thus, because his highness, in his most honourable letters, commandeth me to command and charge all ecclesiastical persons to teach and preach the very sincere Word of God, and to set forth and declare his highness' title, dignity, and style of supreme head, and also his highness' just renunciation of the Bishop of Rome's usurped authority, and all other foreign powers, and afterward, his highness in the same, his most honourable letters, writeth, that if entirely all his said commandment be not briefly executed and put in use, both by myself and all other ecclesiastical persons in all places within my diocese and province, his highness will ascribe the default thereof only to me, and lay the same to my charge. This to do, your great wisdom can consider passeth my power, that is my power to do. I have done as the time hitherto hath served, and will do. I have declared all these things in my own person. I have sent forth commandment to all bishops within my diocese (province), to see the king's commandment in all points executed within their dioceses, and to all archdeacons within my diocese, to see the same executed in their archdeaconries, and both of them to charge all ecclesiastical persons, exempt and not exempt, within their jurisdiction, to execute the king's said commandment, every man for his part, and if I may know that any of them do not their duty, I shall punish them myself as I can ; and further, advertise the king's highness, and his most honourable council thereof. But you know I can not be in all places, ne I shall peradventure hear of all defaults that may be made, ne I can put in theyre heds lernyng and cunneng to preache that have it not alredie, and, therefore, in this behalf, I trust his highness will

not blame me, ne lay it to my charge if any omit to do that they can not do.

“As I have written afore, I do not know in all my diocese twelve secular priests, preachers, and few friars, and almost none of any other religion; but yet, if any ecclesiastical parson within my province do omit to execute the king's commandment, to the best of his power, if I, knowing thereof, ‘doo nodre punish hym,’ nor signify his negligence or contempt to the king's highness, or to his most honourable council, then I must yield myself to blame; but I trust this blame shall not be found in me. I could not take of the king's letters sent to me, that I was charged in my own person to preach and set forth this matter every Sunday and solemn feast; but since I have seen more plain letters addressed to others, I shall not fail to preach every Sunday and solemn feast, in one place or other, and now and then at my cathedral church, and shall cause all other that *can* preach, do the same to the uttermost of my power. This shall not I fail to do, God willing, and to continue till the king's pleasure be further known.

“I have already charged my brother-dean for the cathedral church, that the king's commandment be executed there every Sunday and solemn feast, and likewise within all their jurisdiction. I have, also, taken order, that all deans-rural, shall ‘herken whidre men doo theire dueties, and if oodrewise, to advertise me thereof, and I truste some of my freends woll doo the same.’ I entirely pray you to put this to your old goodness showed to me, that I may have, by your comfortable letters, some relief of the great charge, which the words of the king's letters import, which, you know, I cannot, although I would fulfil; and I trust his highness will not so charge me that I cannot avoid, to run in to his indignation and displeasure, which I shall never wilfully deserve, in any thing that I may do, God not offended.

“The declaration of the injuries done by Clement, I durst not overpass, the king's pleasure not known, because they be comprised in the instructions of last year; and, therefore, I have put them in that all curates, and other ecclesiastical persons, may declare as well the justification of the king's cause of matrimony, as also the express injuries done to his highness by the Bishop of Rome. Hitherto, only the preachers have

done it, and, in my mind, it is not to be forborne; but how long his highness' pleasure shall be, that this shall be declared, it may like you that I may know, and, thereafter, I shall in all things do to the uttermost of my power.

"Dr. Langrige, my chaplain and archdeacon of Cleveland, hath been in his archdeaconry, preaching and setting forth the king's commandment, and delivering of books, some written, some to be written; and among other places, I gave him special commandment to resort to the Prior of Mountgrace to deliver him a book. The said prior received the book; but he allowed not the thing, and said he trusted that none of the broderne would allow any such thing. The said archdeacon did his best to 'alure' him, but he could not bring it to pass. I therefore have sent my letters to the said prior, the copy whereof you shall receive with these; and if I can recover him, I doubt not but it shall stand well with the king's approved mercy and pity that I shall recover him if I can, our Lord give his grace.

"The said archdeacon sheweth me also that to the monastery of Gisbourne came four curates of his archdeaconry, and pretended that they were sore threatened if they published any such things as they were commanded to do; but yet, the said four curates required the archdeacon to spare them to Saint Thomas' Day, and then they would see whether they that made such threatenings continued in their opinion, and if they did, that then they would forthwith certify me. As soon as they shall certify me, I shall advertise you, if it be like to grow to any business. I trust they will better remember 'themselfe.' And thus I commend you to the keeping of our Lord. From Bishopsthorpe, the first of July, 1535.—Your own assured,

"EDOUARDE EBOR."*

On the 9th of July, the archbishop writes:—

"The Prior of Mountgrace this day was with me, and I find him 'verie conformable and applienge to all things.' In some things he required to be satisfied, in which, I trust, he was satisfied, and so holdeth himself well content, and full wisely considereth that it 'besemethe not hym to stonde in anie opinion againste so manie not only being of good learning, but also some of goode livenge;' and hearing that the house of the Charterhouse of London, and other houses of his religion be stayed,

* Cleop. E. vi. 239.

he is much comforted, and for because there be in every house, as he supposeth, some weak, simple men, of small learning, and little discretion, he thinketh it shall do much good if one, Doctor Hord, a prior of their religion, whom all the religious in this realm doth esteem for learning and vertue, were sent not only to his house, but to all other houses of the same religion; he said, which I suppose is true, they will give more credence, and will rather apply their conscience to him and his judgment, than to any other, although of greater learning, and the rather, if with him be joined also some 'oodre good fadre.' This he desired me to move to you, and 'verelie, I think it sholde doo mutche good.' For manye of them bee verie simple men. I have takene hym a booke of declaration to reade amonges his broderne, to staye them with."

At HEXHAM, the commissioners encountered armed resistance. Archbishop Lee pleaded with Cromwell to spare the monastery. In his letter dated Cawood, the 23rd of April, 1536, he says:—

"According to the king's commandment, I have generally given commandment that no preachers shall be suffered, that without discretion preach novelties; and as you right wisely considered, do rather sow seeds of dis- Affray at Hexham. sension than do any good; and some, such as I have heard to use such preaching I have discharged; and yet they preach, but I make process against them; and some of them say they will get licence of the king to preach; but I trust you will suffer no such licence to pass. Some say they have licence of my Lord of Canterbury, but I trust they have no such; and if they have, none shall be obeyed here, but only the king's and yours."*

The commissioners were ordered, notwithstanding the suit of the archbishop, to proceed to "execute the king's most dread commandment of dissolution. Lyonell Gray, and Robert Collynwood, William Green, and James Rokeby, report that:—

* Cotton MSS., Cleopatra E. iv. p. 286.

"The said Lyonell and Robert did enter into the town of Hexham, riding toward the said monastery, did see many persons assembled with bills, halberts, and other defensible weapons, ready standing in the street, like men ready to defend a town of war; and in their passing by the street, the common bell of the town was rung, and straight after the sound of it, the great bell of the monastery was likewise rung, whereby the people forcibly assembled towards the monastery, where the said Lyonell and Robert found the gates and doors fast shut. And a 'chalone,' called the Master of Ovingeham, belonging to the same house, being in harness, with a bow bent with arrows, accompanied with divers other persons, all standing upon the leads and walls of the house and steeple, which Master of Ovingeham answered their words hereunder written: 'We be twelve brethren in this house, and we shall die all, or that ye shall leave this house.' The said Lyonell and Robert answered with request and said: 'Advise you well, and speak with your brethren, and show unto them this our request and declaration of the king's gracious writings, and then give us answer finally.' And so the same master departed into the house, after whose departure did come into the same place five or six of the 'chalones' of the house, with divers other persons, like men of war in harness, and with swords girt about them, having bows and arrows, and other weapons, and stood upon the steeple and leads, in the defence of their house, the said Lyonell and Robert being without, about whom did come and congregate many people, both men with weapons, and many women, and stood there a great space, assured by the said Master of Ovingeham that they should remain peaceably there unto their answer was made, and so to depart without bodily hurt.

"The said Master of Ovingeham being in harness, with the sub-prior, being in his 'chalone's' apparel, not long after did repair again to the said Lyonell and Robert, bringing with them a writing under the king's broad seal, and said these words by the mouth of the sub-prior: 'We do not doubt but ye bring with you the king's seal of authority for this house, albeit ye shall see here the king's confirmation of our house under the great seal of King Henry VIII.; God save his grace. We think it not the king's honour to give forth one seal contrary to another; and afore any other of our lands, goods, or house be

taken from us, we shall all die, and that is our full answer.' And so the said Lyonell and Robert returned and met the rest of the commissioners approaching near the town. 'And so all togeders reculed bak to Corbrigg, where they leyed all y' night.'*"

This resistance of the monks was the signal of a fruitless local rebellion. At the close of the brief struggle, Henry VIII. wrote to Norfolk: "You shall, without pity or circumstance, now that our banner is displayed, cause all the monks and canons that be in anywise faulty, to be tyed uppe, without further delaye or ceremony, to the terrible example of others; wherein we thinke you shall doo unto us highe service."†

The commissioners were delighted with GLASTONBURY. After wending their weary way through bogs and quagmires, they found, to their surprise, magnificent buildings, with a vast domain opening upon their astonished vision from the summit of the Torr in a rich and well-watered plain, extending around them for many miles. "We assure your lordship," they report to Cromwell, "it is the goodliest house of that sort that ever we have seen. We would that your lordship did know it as we do, then, we doubt not, but your lordship would judge it a house meet for the king's majesty, and for no man else, which is to our great comfort." The commissioners felt themselves well paid for their toilsome journey. After the survey of six days, they again express their satisfaction. "The house is great, goodly, and so princely, as we have not seen the like; with four

Monks at
Glaston-
bury.

* Surtees' Society, vol. xlv. Appendix cxxviii. seq.

† State Papers, vol. i. p. 537.

parks adjoining, the furthestmost of them but four miles distant from the house; a great mere, which is five miles compass, being a mile and a-half distant from the house, well replenished with great pikes, bremes, perch and roach; four fair manor places, belonging to the late abbot, the furthestmost but three miles distant, being goodly mansions; and also one in Dorsetshire, twenty miles distant from the late monastery."

Here was a fine property, and the zealous commissioners had at length made discovery of delinquencies which would serve as an occasion to justify them in taking forcible possession. On returning to Bristol from a former visit, Dr. Layton (one of the commissioners), in a letter written "at four o'clock in the morning," in a tone of disappointment, says, "at Glastonberie there is nothing notable; the brethren be so strait keppide that they cannot offende." The commissioners now report the existence of abuses evidently to their entire satisfaction:—

"We came," they write to Cromwell, "to Glastonbury on Friday last past, about ten of the clock in the forenoon; and for that the abbot was then at Sharpham, a place of his, a mile and somewhat more from the abbey. After communication declaring unto him the effect of our coming, examined him upon certain articles. And for that his answer was not then *to our purpose*, we advised him to call to his remembrance that which he had as then forgotten, and so declare the truth, and then came with him the same day to the abbey; and there of new proceeded that night to search his study for letters and books, and found in his study secretly laid, as well a written book of arguments against the divorce of his king's majesty and the lady dowager, which we take to be great matters, as also divers pardons, copies of bulls, and the counterfeit life of Thomas

A'Beckett in print; but we could not find any letter that was material. And so we proceeded again to his examination concerning the articles we received from your lordship, in the answers whereof, as we take it, shall appear his cankered and traitorous heart and mind against the king's majesty and his succession, as by the same answers, signed with his hand, and sent to your lordship by this bearer, shall more plainly appear. And so, with as fair words as we could, we have conveyed him from hence into the Tower, being but a very weak man and sickly. And as yet we have neither discharged servant nor monk; but now the abbot being gone we will, with as much celerity as we may, proceed to the dispatching of them. We have in money £300 and above; but the certainty of other plate and other stuff there as yet we know not, for we have not had opportunity for the same; but shortly we intend (God willing) to proceed to the same; whereof we shall ascertain your lordship as shortly as we may. This is also to advertise your lordship that we have found a fair chalice of gold, and divers other parcels of plate, which the abbot had hid secretly from all such commissioners as have been there in time past; and as yet he knoweth not that we have found the same, whereby, we think, that he thought to make his hand, by his untruth to his king's majesty."*

In a second letter the commissioners write:—

"We have daily found and tried out both money and plate hid and mined up in walls, vaults, and other secret places as by the abbot as other of the convent, and also conveyed to divers places in the country. And in case we should here tarry this fortnight, we do suppose daily to increase in plate and other goods, by false knaves conveyed. And among other petty briberies, we have found the two treasurers of the church monks, with the two clerks of the vestry, temporal men, in so arrant and manifest robbery that we have committed the same to the jail. At our first entry into the treasure-house, and vestry also, we neither found jewels, plate, nor ornaments sufficient to serve a poor parish church, whereof we could not a little marvel; and thereupon immediately made so diligent inquiry and search, that with vigilant labour we much improvide the same, and have

* Tanner MSS. Camden Society's Letters relating to the Suppression of Monasteries.

recovered again into our hands both money, plate, and ornaments of the church. How much plate we know not, for we had no leisure yet to weigh the same, but we think it of a great value ; and we increase it more every day, and shall do, as we suppose, for our time here being. We assure your lordship that the abbot and the monks foresaid, had embezzled and stolen as much plate and adornments as would have sufficed to have begun a new abbey ; what they meant thereby, we leave it to your judgment. Whether the king's pleasure shall be to execute his laws upon the said four persons, and to minister them justice according to their deserts, or to extend his mercy towards them, and what his majesty's pleasure is, it may please your lordship to advertise us thereof."*

To make the case more clear for capital punishment, the commissioners sent a further note to the following effect :—

"Pleaseth it your lordship to be advertised that sithens the direction of our last letters unto your lordship, we have come to knowledge of *divers and sundry treasons* committed and done by the Abbot of Glastonbury, the certainty whereof shall appear unto your lordship in a book herein enclosed, and the accusers' names put to the same, 'wych we thynke to be verye haut and ranke treasons. And thus Jesus preserve your good lordship.' From Glastonbury, the second day of October."†

The fate of the abbot after this report was certain. Lord Russell, writing from Wells, the 16th day of November, says :—

"My lord, this shall be to ascertain, that on Thursday the 14th day of this present month the Abbot of Glastonbury was arraigned, and the next day put to execution with two other of his monks, for the *robbing of Glastonbury church*, on the Torr Hill, next unto the town of Glaston, the said abbot's body being 'devyded in foure partes, and heed stryken off, whereof oone quarter stondythe at Welles, another at Bathe, and at Ylchester and Brigewater, the reste, and his hedd upon the abbey gate at Glaston.' And here I do send your lordship the names of the inquest that passed on Whiting, the said abbot, which I ensure

* State Papers, vol. i. p. 619.

† Ibid. p. 621.

you, my lord, is as worshipful a jury as was charged here these many years. And there was never seen in these parts so great appearance as were here at this present time, and never better willing to serve the king. My Lord, I assure you there were many bills put up against the abbot by his tenants and others for wrongs and injuries that he had done them."*

Mr. Commissioner Pollard gives a more circumstantial account of the execution:—

"Pleaseth it your lordship, to be advertised, that since my last letter sent unto your lordship, bearing date the 15th day of November, the same 15th day the late Abbot of Glastonbury went from Wells to Glastonbury, and there was drawn through the town upon a hurdle to the hill called the Torr, where he was put to execution, at which time he asked God's mercy and the king for his great offences towards his highness, and also desired my servants there present to see the execution done, that they would be mean to my lord president and to me, that we should desire the king's highness of his merciful goodness, and in the way of charity to forgive him his great offences by him committed and done against his grace, and thereupon took his death very patiently, and his head and body bestowed in like manner as I certified your lordship in my last letter. And likewise the other two monks desired likewise forgiveness, and took their death very patiently, whose souls God pardon. And whereas I at my last being with your lordship at London moved your lordship for my brother (Commissioner) Paulett, desiring your lordship to be a mean that he might have the surveyorship of Glastonbury, which I doubt not but he will use and exercise the said office to the king's most profit and advantage, and your lordship's goodness herein to him to be showed he shall recompense to his little power. I assure your lordship he hath been very diligent, and divers others by means to serve the king at this time according to his duty and right. So was Nicolas Fitzjames, John Sydnam, and Thomas Horner, your servants. Also this is to advertise your lordship that the late Abbot of Glastonbury, afore his execution, was examined upon divers articles and interrogatories to him ministered by me, but he could accuse no man but himself of any offence against the king's highness, nor he

* Cotton MSS., Cleop. E. iv. fol. 99.

would confess no more gold nor silver, nor any other thing more than he did afore your lordship in the Tower. My Lord Russell taketh his journey this present day from Wells towards London. I suppose it will be near Christmas before I shall have surveyed the lands of Glastonbury, and taken the audit there. Other news I know none, as knoweth God, who ever preserve your lordship.”*

These melancholy tragedies seem to have produced a deep impression on the monastic fraternities. We do not find any remarkable examples of constancy in the maintenance of religious principles, though some attempted to rouse their brethren to a sense of their duty in the crisis by which they were overtaken.

The Abbot of Woburn, Robert Hobbes, reports : Robert Salford did call us into the Chapter-house, and said :—

“Brethren, this is a perilous time. Such a scourge was never heard since Christ’s passion. Ye hear how good men suffer death. Brethren, this is undoubtedly for our offences. Ye read, so long as the children of Israel kept the commandments of God so long the enemies had no power of them, but God took vengeance on their enemies. But when they broke God’s commandments, then they were subdued by their enemies, and so we be. Let us be sorry for our offences. Undoubtedly He will take vengeance of our enemies, I mean those heretics that causeth so many good men to suffer thus. Alas ! it is a piteous case that so much Christian blood should be shed. Therefore, good brethren, for the reverence of God, every one of you devoutly pray, and sing this psalm : ‘O God, the heathen are come into Thine inheritance.’”

Other psalms were appointed, but the fraternity consulted their own safety, and preached against all that the prior most valued in language purposely

* Cotton MSS., Cleop. E. iv. fol. 133.

coarse. The health of the prior failed, and he was expected to die, the monks gathered round him. He implored them never to leave the monastery, or if compelled never to forsake their habit. Then in great agony he rose out of his bed and cried, "I would to God it would please Him to take me out of this wretched world. I would I had died with the good men that have suffered heretofore, for they were quickly out of pain." Then quoting the words of Bernard about the Pope, he exclaimed: "*Tu quis es primatu Abel, gubernatione Noah, auctoritate Moses, judicatu Samuel, potestate Petrus, unctione Christus aliæ ecclesiæ habent super se pastores pastor parvorum es.*" The poor man recovered and took part in the rebellion. The abbot and prior, with the parson of Puddington (a parish in the neighbourhood) were more careful of their lives, and wrote a letter of submission to the king, in which they say:—

"We being inwardly stricken with sorrow and heaviness, for that our deserts should be such that any jot of due obedience unto your grace (whom under God we do agnise to be our *supreme head, our comfort, and our joy*), should be noted in us, seeing we be and ever have been, as we trust in God, clear from any such crimes and enormities, and therefore judging nothing to be so expedient and behoofull unto us as clearly to renounce all pretext of excuse or trial with your grace, by which we might percase in our default incur your majestie's high indignation to our utter undoing, do in most humble wise and upon our heart and mind submit ourselves and our monastery, with all the moveables and unmoveables thereof, unto your majesty's accustomed grace and mercy, meekly desiring the same to show your pity and compassion upon us."*

The Prior of GREAT MALVERN evinced his willing-

* Cleop. M. iv. fol. 96.

ness to adjust himself to the position required by the authorities, and requested the kind offices of Hugh Latimer. The bishop at the time was in a feeble state of health.

The prior
of Great
Malvern
and La-
timer.

He says : " I am in a fayntt werynesse over all my boody, but cheffly in the small of my backe, butt I have a good nurrshe, good Mastress Pasham, wych, seynge whatt casse I was in, hath facyd me hoom to here owne howse, and doth pympar me upe with all dyligence, for I fere a consumption, but ytt maketh lytule matter for me." Thanks to the excellent care of Mrs. Pasham, Latimer seems to have been restored and writing in behalf of the anxious prior.

" At the request of an honest man, the prior of Great Malvern, in my diocese, though not of any diocese, referring the success of the whole matter to your 'ownly approvyd wysdom and benynge goodness in every case,' for I know that I do play the fool, but yet with my foolishness I somewhat quiet an unquiet man, and mitigate his heaviness, which I am bold to do with you, for that I know by experience your goodness, that you will bear with fools in their frailness. This man both heareth and feareth (as he saith) the suppression of his house, which, *though he will be conformable in all points to the king's highness' pleasure* and yours, once known, as both I advertised him, and also his bounden duty is to be yet. Nevertheless if he thought his enterprise should not be mistake(n) nor turn to any displeasure, he would be an humble suitor to your lordship, and by the same to the king's good grace, for the upstanding of his foresaid house, and continuance of the same to many good purposes, not in monkery he meaneth not so, God forbid, but any other ways as should be thought and seem good to the king's majesty, as to maintain teaching, preaching, study, with praying, and (to the which he is much given) good housekeeping. For to the virtue of hospitality he hath been greatly inclined from his beginning, and is very much commended in these parts for the same; *so that if five hundred marks to the king's highness, with two hundred*

marks to yourself, for your good will, might occasion the promotion of this intent, at least way for the time of his life, he doubteth not to make his friends for the same, if so little could bring so much to pass. The man is old, a good housekeeper, feedeth many, and that daily, for the country is poor and full of penury: and, alas! my good lord, shall we not see two or three in every shire changed to such remedy.

"Thus to this honest man's importunity hath brought me beyond my duty, saving for the confidence and trust that I always have in your benignity. As he hath knowledge from you, so he will prepare for you. Sir William Kyngston can make report of the man. God prospere you to the utteryng of all hoolow harttes. Blessed be God of Englande that workyth all, hows instrumente you be! I herde you say soone after you had sene that furyows invectyve of Cardynall Pooll, that you wold make hym to ete hys owne hartt, which you have now (I trow) brought to passe, for he muste nedes now ete hys own hartt, and becum as hartlesse as he ys gracelesse."*

Some of the monks evinced extraordinary willingness to oblige his highness by adopting any view most approved for the time, and to save the trouble of any tedious process of conviction. John Foster was a pliant brother of this kind. He writes to Cromwell:—

"In my most humble wise, I being not so bold as to appear before your lordship, until your pleasure is known, fear set apart now compelleth me to write. This last I did no less than writ, and also to your presence I did ^{Foster's mean} approach, suing for your lordship's gracious service: ^{submission.} but now my suit is much other, for '*my disfortune hath been to have conceived untruly God's Word, and not only neth yntellectyon to have thought yt but exteryally, and really I have fulfilled the same*;' for I as then being a priest have accomplished marriage, nothing pretending, but as an obedient subject, for if the king's grace could have found it lawful that priests might have been married, they would have been to the crown double and double faithful: first, in love; secondly, for fear that

* Cotton MSS., Cleop. E. iv. fol. 264.

the Bishop of Rome should set in his power to their desolation. But now by the noise of the people I perceive I have done amiss, which saith that the king's erudite judgment, with all his council, temporal and spiritual, hath established a contrary order, that all priests should be separate by a day; with which order I have contented myself, and as soon as I heard it to be true, I sent the woman to her friends, threescore miles from me, and speedily and with all celerity I have resorted hither to desire the king's highness of his favour and absolution for my amiss doing, praying and beseeching your lordship's gracious comfort for the obtaining of his gracious pardon, and I shall be your bounden servant in heart and also in continual service, if it shall please your gracious lordship to accept it during my life. Written the 18th day of June.—Your bounden for ever,

“JOHN FOSTER.”*

Legh tells his “Mastership Cromwell” that the monks of HOLME are very happy in being dissolved and in wearing the “secular apparel.” In the diocese of Carlisle they are “very Monks happy to be dissolved. tractable, lacking nothing but good and sound instruction;” “they are right sorry for their offences,” the zealous commissioner says that he has been very diligent, and asks that he and his brother may be preferred to the farm of the abbey; the old abbot would like a pension as the reward of his easy conformity.

The “injunctions” enforced by the commissioners were “somewhat hard and strait to be observed and kept.” The monks who were permitted to remain in the monasteries were expected to keep within the most narrow bounds. They petitioned earnestly for a little more latitude to visit the farms and to keep things in order. The Abbot of ST. AUSTIN'S, Bristol, entreated that he might be permitted “to walk within the green,” and that his

* Cotton MSS., Cleop. E. iv. fol. 116.

ceive ignorance was a great cause why that these my brethren were thus far out of good order and in continual unquietness, to the intent that I "wolde somewhat an inducdd them to understanding. *I caused bokes of gramer* to be bowght for eche of them, and assignedd mi brother to enstruct theim, but ther wolde come non to him but Richard Balldok and Thomas Clement."* The abbot relates gross acts of immorality which we forbear to describe.

Cases of perplexity arose, which the commissioners carefully explained to Cromwell in the course of their local inquiries. Robert Thompson was brought up and committed to prison for praying for the Bishop of Rome, "at the compulsion of his parishioners whom he durst not contrary at the time." Cases of perplexity.

The Bishop of Dover says: "I could, by just and fair means, and do no wrong, despatch a great part of the friars in England, or my year of visitation was ended, so that I might have some liberty to licence them to change their habits after their houses were given up; their hearts be clean from the religion, for the more part, so they might change their coats, the which they may not be able to pay for, for they have nothing."

The monks in prison were quite subdued. One of the commissioners says:—

"I came to York, and there sent with my servant my charity to the prisoners in the castle, amongst whom being a priest and Anthony Heron. Perceiving that I was come to the city, they required me for Christ's sake to come and to speak to them in the castle. So I did. This imprisonment is for disobeying the king's title, and style of Monks in York Castle.

* Cotton MSS., Cleop. E. iv. fol. 163.

supremacy ; and after I came to the monk and the priest sitting in strong fetters, they prayed me to help them and speak for them to your mastership, for they would be as humble, obedient, faithful, true subjects to the king's majesty, and to all his ordinances and laws and statutes, as should become them to be. They were both most lowly with weeping, entreating us to beseech his grace. Anthony Heron walked without in the yard, and so there I talked with him because of the air. He was deceived and blind, and thanked God and the king for his correction. Thus much, with more, I heard him speak or ever I said anything, and then I opened unto them all such places of Scripture as I could do for their better establishment in their allegiance. Now what as shall be your pleasure herein I would fain know, and so shall we be ready to your commandment. They be in extreme misery, and the priest is like to perish for want of sustentation. I assure your mastership, *bona fide*."*

The commissioners took great pains with the monks of Syon. Bedyll writes to Cromwell :—

"I have been at Syon sith your departing with my lord of London, where we have found the lady abbas and susters as conformable in everything as myght be devised. And as towching the father confessor and ffather Cursone (which be the saddest men ther and best learned), they shewed thaimselves like honest men ; and I think the confessor wol now on Sonday next, in his sermon, make due mension of the kinges title of supreme hed, acord-
 Monks of Syon. ing as he is commaunded. What towardnes or intowardnes we have seen in som other of the brethren there, I wol informe you at your retorne to Londone, and omitte it now bicause I have som hope that by the wisdom of the father confessor and Father Cursone, the residue shall be brought to good conformite. And if not, there be two of the brethren must be wedded out, whiche be sumwhat sediciose, and have labored busily to infect their felowes with obstinacy against the kinges said title."†

Bedyll, it would appear, was rather over-worked in the cause. He adds :—

* Cromwell Corresp. R. O.

† Cotton MSS. Cleop. vi. fol. 168.

"I have kept Londone al this yere and have had litel passe-tyme abrode. If it myght please you to help me to a warrant or two in Kent, at Ledys or elwher, or nyghe London, it wolde be muche to my comfort, which am alwayes at your commaundment."

Layton kept "Syon" under close observation. After an interval of five months, he sends another report, dated, "this Sondag xij. Decembris :"—

"Hit may please your goodnes to understonde that Bisshope this day prechede and delarede the kinges title vara well, and hade a gret audience; the churche full of people. One of the focares in his saide declaration openly callede hym fals knave, witte other folisshe wordes. Hit was that folisshe felowe with the curlede hede that knelyde in your way when ye came forthe of the confessor's chambre. I cannolesse do but set hym in prison, *ut pena ejus sit metus aliorum*. Yesterday, I lernede many enormouse thynges againste Bisshope in the examination of the lay brederen: firste that Bisshope persuadyt two of the brederyn to have gone ther ways by night, and he hymself with them, and to thaccomplicement of that they lakede but money to by the seculer apparell."*

The lay brethren reported scandals respecting "wenches" which we may omit.

From a communication, sent by Bedyll, six days after, we infer that the "conformite" of the monks was only in appearance:—

"Maister Leighton and I," he says, "have had muche business with this house sythens your departing hens; and as for the brethern, they stand stif in thair obstinacy as you left thaim. Copynger and Lache were sent to my Lord of London on Moneday. Here wer on Tuesday, Doctour Buttes, and the quenys amner to convert Wytford and Litell; and on Wensday here wer Doctor Aldrigge, Doctour Curven, Doctor Bawghe and Doctor Morgan, sent by the kinges grace for that purpose, but they nothing proficted. I handled Whitford after that in the garden, bothe with fair wordes and with foule, and shewed him that throughe his obstinacy he shuld be brought to the greate shame of the world for his irreligious life; but

* Cotton MSS. Cleop. E. iv. fol. 125.

he hath a brasyn forehed, whiche shameth at nothing. One, Matthew, a lay brother, upon hope of liberte, is reformed. We wolde fayne know your advise what we shal do with Whitford and Litell, and a lay brother, one Turnyngton, whiche is very sturdy against the kinges title. We have sequesterd Whitford and Litell from hering of the ladys confessions, and we think it best that the place wher thes frires have been wont to hire uttward confessions of al commers, at certen tymes of the yere be walled up, and that use to be fordoen for ever; ffor that hering of utward confessions, hath been the cause of muche evyl, and of muche treson, whiche hath been sowed abroad in this mater of the kinges title, and also in the kinges graces mater of his succession and mariage.

"On Wednesday, my Lord of Wyndsor came hither, sent for Master Leighton and me, and laboured much that day for the converting Wytford's sister, and some other of his kinswoman here; and yesterday we had my Lord of London here in the chapter-house of women, and the confessor also, which both took it upon their consciences, and upon the peril of their souls, that the ladies ought, by God's law, to consent to the king's title, wherewith they were much comforted; and when we willed all such as consented to the king's title to sit still, and all such as would not consent thereto to depart out of the chapter-house; there was found not one among them that departed. Albeit, I was informed this night, that one, Agnes Smyth, a sturdy dame and a wilful, hath laboured divers of her sisters to stop that we should not have their convent seal, but we trust we shall have it this morning with the subscription of the abbess for herself, and all her sistèrs, which is the best fashion we can bring it to."*

The Lady Abbess of GodSTOWE set the commissioners at defiance. Writing to Cromwell, she says:—

"I have done the best in my power to the maintenance of
 God's true honour, with all truth and obedience to
 the king's majesty, and never moved nor desired by
 any creature in the king's behalf, or in your lord-
 ship's name, to surrender and give up this house;
 nor was ever minded nor intended so to do otherwise than at

* Cleop. E. iv. fol. 109.

the king's gracious commandment, or yours, to the which I do and have ever done, and will submit myself most humbly and obediently, and I trust God that I never offended God's laws, neither the king's, whereby this poor monastery ought to be suppressed, and this notwithstanding, my good lord, so it is that Doctor London, which as your lordship doth well know was against my promotion, and hath ever since borne me great malice and grudge, like my mortal enemy, is suddenly comed unto me with a great rout with him, and here doth threaten me and my sisters, saying, that he hath the king's commission to suppress the house, spite of my teeth, and when he saw that I was content that he should do all things according to his commission, and showed him plain that I would never surrender to his hand, being my ancient enemy; now he began to entreat me, and to inveigle my sisters, one by one, otherwise than ever I heard tell that any of the king's subjects hath been handled, and here tarrieth and continueth to my great cost and charge, and will not take my answer that I will not surrender till I know the king's commandment or your good lordship's. Therefore I do most humbly beseech you to continue my good lord as you have ever been, and to direct your honourable letters to remove him hence; and whensoever the king's gracious commandment, or yours, shall come unto me you shall find me most ready and obedient to follow the same. And, notwithstanding, the Doctor London, like a untrue man, hath informed your lordship that I am a spoiler and a waster; your good lordship shall know that the contrary is true, for I have not alienate one 'halporthe' of the goods of this monastery, moveable or unmoveable, but have rather increased the same, nor never made lease of any farm or piece of ground belonging to this house other than hath been in time's past always set under convent seal, for the wealth of this house, and therefore, my very trust is that I shall find the king as gracious lord unto me as he is to all other his subjects, seeing I have not offended, and am and will be most obedient to his most gracious commandment at all times, with the grace of the almighty Jesus, who ever preserve you in honour, long to endure to his pleasure. Amen. At Godstowe, the 5th day of November.—Your most bounden bedeswoman,

“ KATHERINE BULKELEY, Abbess there.”

This spirited Lady Abbess won the day. She writes again "to the right honourable and my very singular good lord, my lord privy Seal.

"My most singular good Lord,—After my most humble duty, this be especially to thank you for that it pleaseth you to direct your letters for the stay of Doctor London which was here ready to suppress this poor house against my will and all my sisters, and hath done it indeed if you had not so speedily sent contrary commandment, for the which your goodness shall be well assured as I am all ready most bounden of a poor maiden, to pray during my life seeing I have no other riches to recompense you withal and when it pleased you to direct your letters since that time to me and my sisters, for the preferment of Master Doctor Owen to our domains and stock. These be to certify your lordship, that we have accomplished the same with all favour and gentleness, as I trust he will report and give your lordship thanks therefor, for no man living under the king, could have had it of us with our good wills, saving your lordship, and therefore as my very trust and comfort is in you, I beseech you to continue, my good lord, as I trust you shall never have cause to the contrary, for your lordship shall be well assured that 'there is neither Pope nor purgatorie, image nor pilgrimage, ne praying to dede saints, used or regarded amongstest hus but all superstitious ceremonies set aparte; the verie honor of God, and the trewth of his holie wordes, as farre as the fraile nature of women may attayne unto, is mooste tenderlye followed and regarded, withe hus not dowyng but this garmente and facon of liffe dothe nothinge prevaile towarde oure justifyinge before God, by whome, for his swete Son Jhesus sake we onlee truste to be justified and saved, who ever presarve your honour to his pleasure.' Amen. At Godstowe, this 25th day of November.—Your most bounden bedeswoman,

"KATHERINE BULKELY, Abbes there."*

The commissioners combined the duties of the detective, inspector, bailiff, and missionary. Their one business was to persuade or compel all to acknowledge the supremacy of the king, and renounce

* Cromwell Corresp. R. O.

their allegiance to the Bishop of Rome. They collected great spoil, and amongst other treasures they sent from the monasteries a large quantity of relics. The Bishop of Dover reports :—

“I have Malchus’s ear that Peter struck off, but the holiest relic in all North Wales I send to you here. There may no man kiss that but he must kneel so soon as he see it, though it were in the foulest place in all the country ; ^{Relics collected.} and he must kiss every stone, for in each is great pardon. After that he hath kissed it, he must pay a mete of corn, or a cheese, or a groat or fourpence for it. It was worth to the friars in Bangor, with another image which I also have closed up, twenty marks by the year in corn, cheese, cattle, and money. If that I should write all such images that idolatry hath used that would take a sheet of paper, the which I have avoided.”*

There was of late in this monastery (of WEST-ACRE), Southwell reports—

“A piece of St. Andrew’s finger, covered with an ounce of silver or thereabout (as I conjecture), a very precious jewel in the estimation of many, and now laid to pledge by the monastery to one of the town for 40 li., which we intend not to redeem of the price, except we be commanded so to do.”†

Some of the monks openly “confessed their evil deeds.” To close the whole matter, we quote the following from a letter of “Rip Beerley, monck yn the monastery of Pershor,” and addressed—

“To my nobull and gracyus lord vycytar yn the kynges cortt be thys byl delyvered yn hast.” He says that for “syx yere” the vices he has seen and practised “greve” his “conchons sore ;” and adds, “helpe me owf of thys ^{Confession of Beerley.} wayne relygyon, and macke me your servant, handemayd, and beydman, and save mye sowlle, wych shold be loste if ye helpe yt not, the wych you may save withe on word speekyng, and mayck me wych am now nawtt to cum unto grace and

* Cotton MSS. Cleop. E. iv. fol. 213.

† Ibid. 218.

goodnes. Now y wyll ynstrux your grace sumwatt of relygyus men, and how the kynges grace commandyment ys kepp yn puttyng forth of bockes the beyshatt of Rome's userpt power. Monckes drynk an bowlle after collacyon tell ten or xii of the clock, an cum to mattens as dronck as myss, and sume at cardes, sume at dyys, and at tabulles; sume cum to mattens begenyng at the mydes, and sume when yt ys almost done, and wold not cum ther so only for boddly punnysment, nothing for Godees sayck, wyth many other vycys the use, wyche y have no leser now to express. Also abbettes, monckes, prest don lyttyl or nothing to put owte of bockes the beyshatt of Romees name, for y my seylfe do know yn dyvers bockes wher ys name and hys userpt powor upon us ys. No more unto your nobul grace at thys tyme, but Jesu preserve you to pleser. Amen."*

The king's highness, Lord Cromwell, the commissioners, and monks appear in this extensive correspondence nearly on the same moral level. We are now glad to dismiss them from our attention. The leaning of Henry VIII. toward the Reformers depended solely on his political relations with the continent. Hooper writes to Bullinger:—

"The king will take up the gospel of Christ, in case the emperor should be defeated in this most destructive war! Should the gospel sustain a loss, he will then retain his impious mass, for which he has this last summer committed four respectable and godly persons to the flames. As far as true religion is concerned, idolatry is nowhere in greater vigour. Our king has destroyed the Pope, but not Popery; he has expelled all the monks and nuns, and pulled down the monasteries; he has caused all their possessions to be transferred into his exchequer; and yet they are bound, even the frail sex, by the king's command to perpetual chastity. England has at this time at least ten thousand nuns, not one of whom is allowed to marry. The impious mass, the most shameful celibacy of the clergy, the invocation of saints, auricular confession, superstitious abstinence from meats, and purgatory, were never more held by the people in greater esteem than at the present moment."

* Cotton MSS. Cleop. E. iv. fol. 161.

Alesius, with others who had taken part in the struggle under the direction of Cromwell, were anxious to escape. In the letter to Queen Elizabeth, already quoted, Alesius says:—

“Never shall I forget the sorrow which I felt when I saw the most serene queen, your most religious mother, carrying you, still a little baby, in her arms, and entreating the most serene king, your father, in Greenwich Palace, from the open window of which he was looking into the court-yard when she brought you to him.”

Letter of
Alesius to
Queen
Elizabeth.

“I did not perfectly understand what had been going on, but the faces and gestures of the speakers plainly showed that the king was angry, although he could conceal his anger wonderfully well. Yet from the protracted conference of the council, for whom the crowd was waiting until it was quite dark, expecting that they would return to London, it was most obvious to every one that some dreadful and difficult question was being discussed.

“When I could not bear these things with a good conscience nor could my profession allow me to dissemble them (for I was filling the office of reader in the celebrated university of Cambridge by the king’s orders), I came to the court and asked for my dismissal by means of Cromwell. But he retained me about three years with empty hopes, until it was decreed and confirmed by law that married priests should be separated from their wives. But before this law was published (in relation to celibacy), the Bishop of Canterbury sent Lord Paget from Lambeth to me at London. He directed me to call upon the archbishop early in the morning. ‘Happy man that you are,’ said he, ‘you can escape! I wish that I might do the same; my see would be no hindrance to me. You must make haste to escape before the island is blocked up, unless you are willing to sign the decree, as I have, compelled by fear. I repent of what I have done, and if I had known that my only punishment would have been deposition from the archbishopric, as I hear my Lord Latimer is deposed, of a truth I should have subscribed. I am grieved however, that you have been deprived of your salary for three years by Cromwell; that you have no funds for your travelling expenses, and that I have no ready money; nor dare I mention this to my friends, lest the king should become aware that

warning had been given by me for you to escape, and that I had provided you with the means of travelling. I give you, however, this ring as a token of my friendship. It once belonged to Thomas Wolsey, and it was presented to me by the king when he gave me the archbishopric.

"When I heard what the bishop had to say, I immediately caused my property to be sold, and I concealed myself in the house of a German sailor until the ship was ready, in which I embarked, dressed as a soldier, along with other German troops, that I might not be detected. When I had escaped a company of searchers, I wrote to Cromwell, although he had not behaved well towards me, and warned him of the danger in which he stood at that time and about certain other matters. For this I can vouch the testimony of John Ales, Gregory, and the secretary and Paget himself. But Christopher Mount said that Cromwell did not dare to speak to me when I was going away, and soliciting my dismissal, nor could he venture to give me anything, lest he should be accused to the king, but that he would send the sum that he owed me unto Germany."*

In addition to the law of the "Six Articles," an Act was passed by Parliament "that the king for the time being, with the advice of his council, might set forth proclamations with pains and penalties in them, which were to be obeyed as if they were made by an Act of Parliament."

The king in every way was supreme and his will was law. He was tired of Cromwell, and after the
Fall of Cromwell. formality of a trial, sent him to the place of execution. One of the charges against him was that "being a heretic, he had dispersed many erroneous books amongst the king's subjects, particularly some that were contrary to the belief of sacrament," and that he had appointed preachers suspected of heresy, liberated heretical prisoners, and punished the informers.

* R. O. MSS.

In these measures Cromwell had the sanction and concurrence of the queen, Anne Boleyn. A letter is extant in her own handwriting, to restore to his "pristine freedom," Richard Herman, a merchant of Antwerp, who had been "expelled from his fellowship of and in the English house there, for nothing else but only that he did with his goods and policy to his great hurt and hindrance in this world, help to the setting forth of the New Testament in English."

Everything that seemed to be gained for a time, by the dubious and inconsistent policy of Cranmer, Cromwell, Latimer, and Coverdale, was lost, and to their discredit and injury. But the Christian people (passed over almost in silence by ecclesiastical historians) continued to read in secret the Word of God. They could not conceal the interest they felt for the truth, nor refrain from the expression of their honest convictions. In vain they observed every precaution, the spies of the bishops followed them stealthily as they walked together in secluded spots, listened to their confidential conversation, and then dragged them before the authorities, ever ready to seize on their defenceless victims. Every prison in the city was filled with the most exemplary persons in the community. The dungeons attached to the episcopal palaces, in particular, were crowded. Above five hundred persons were brought up for examination. The case of JOHN PORTER and that of JOHN MARBECK we may notice as that of representative Christian confessors. Porter was a young man, a reader of the Bible chained at Paul's Cross. His

Policy of
Cranmer
and Crom-
well de-
feated.

Silent
growth of
the truth.

Porter and
Marbeck.

distinct voice and commanding appearance rendered him a favourite with the people who used to flock to that place to listen to his impressive rehearsal of a portion of the Word of God. Shortly after his imprisonment he was removed to the side of the gaol on which were confined the worst offenders; and influenced by motives of Christian compassion, he repeated to the felons and murderers the words of Scripture which had so often instructed and comforted the people at Paul's Cross; for this aggravation of his imputed offence he was subjected by his tormentors to the severest tortures.

Marbeck was imprisoned in the Marshalsea for compiling the first English concordance. The
1543. bishops entirely disapproved of his work, because there was a Latin concordance already printed, and they said to have one in English would destroy the Latin tongue. Their principal object in the conferences they had with him was to elicit some information respecting his Christian associates, and they met him repeatedly in the Marshalsea and at the Church of St. Marie Overies for this purpose. On the afternoon of Whitsunday he says, "he found Dr. Oking with another gentleman in a gown of damask, with a chain of gold about his neck, sitting together in one of the stalls, their backs turned towards the church door, *looking upon an epistle of Calvin which he had written out.* Marbeck, in his defence, pleaded that he had copied the treatise before the promulgation of the recent statutes, and that for six years he had been almost wholly employed as a copyist. Four times his inquisitors summoned him before them, and by alter-

nate promises and menaces tried to extort from him the names of persons supposed to be in correspondence with him ; but he remained firm and would betray none of them.

Great excitement was caused at this time by the circulation of English tracts printed at Basle, against the persecuting papal party. WILLIAM TURNER, who had been banished for preaching the gospel, wrote a pungent pamphlet, entitled, "The Huntyng and Fyndyng out of the Romysh Foxe," addressed to Henry VIII., to prove that he had not, with all his ecclesiastical changes, banished Popery. The last paragraph of the work will suffice to show its general character :—

"After that I had finished this book," he says, "it was told me that the bishops had made an Act that none but gentlemen and gentlewomen might read the Scriptures, and certain rich men. But I will ask the authors of the Act whether they suffer the 'gentelles' and the rich to read the Scripture for their soul's health, or for their pastime. If they suffer them to read it for their soul's health, did not Christ preach as well for craftsmen and poor men as for gentle men and rich men, and would not Christ that the poor labouring men should have wherewith they might comfort their souls as well as rich and gentle men? If they let the gentles and the rich read the Scripture for their pastime, then they have our Saviour Christ in great estimation, which take his testament for a jest to make pastime with. But some politic man, perchance, will say, 'The rich men and the nobles are wiser than the poor people, and can order it.' Well, and so cannot the poor people? Whatsoever thou art that for any such cause drivest poor men from the Scripture, I say thou art one of the Pharisees, which said, 'This common sort of the people, which understandeth not the law, is accursed.' I ask also the authors of this Act, whom I take to be *burning bishops*, whether the four evangelists wrote truly the deeds of Christ and his preaching ; and whether there is in the Acts of the Apostles

and in the four gospels, beside Christ's preachings and teachings, that can make a labouring man a heretic if he read it or not? I ask whether a man may read Christ's preaching and the story of his life without jeopardy of heresy?

"If ye say that a poor man may not read Christ's preachings and deeds without jeopardy of heresy, I ask, then, whether a man may read Bishop Tunstall's sermon that he made without jeopardy of heresy or not? If ye grant this, then ye reckon a man wiser than God; seeing a sermon that poor men may read without any jeopardy of heresy, and that Christ could make none such, but as the poor people if they were not forbidden to read them, should fall into many heresies by the reading thereof. To be short, whosoever forbiddeth a man's sermon to be read of the common people, the same would forbid the 'self peple' to hear the maker of the sermon, to preach it as it is written; but the bishops forbid the poor people to read Christ's sermons; *ergo*, if Christ were in England, and would preach the self-same preaching as the evangelists have written them, ye would forbid the people to hear Christ preach them. If this argument be not good, reprove it in your answer, and salute it not with a fire or a rope as you use commonly to do. God send you his Holy Spirit. *Amen.*" *

From the "Council-book" we learn that five-and-twenty booksellers were examined as to all books, more particularly English books, they had sold these last three years. The Privy Council were occupied several days from the 24th of December, in the case of Thomas Whalpole, a seditious fellow, and a setter forth of a naughty book made by Philip Melancthon against the king's acts of "Christian religion." On the 25th of December, "a letter was written to Sir Giles Alyngton, knight, Sergeant Hynd, Philip Parys, and Thomas Megge, Esquires, to take a chaplain of the Bishop of Elyes, Forfeth, or such like name, and one Deryck, a servant of the said

* The Huntyng and Fyndyng out of the Romysh Foxe. Imprynted at Basyll, 1543, 17th of September.

bishop, accused as setters forth of the said epistle, and to search their chambers, and to send them up hither to the council; and in case that it appeared certainty to them, that the bishop was of counsel of the translation of the said epistle: they should also search the bishop's study, and charge him to appear before the council incontinently."

On the 2nd of January, Thomas Cottisford, priest (chaplain to the Bishop of Ely), and Deryck, or Flemming, servant to the bishop, appeared before the council. Deryck confessed that he had the copy of the epistle of Cottisford, and was committed to the marshal's ward. Cottisford in turn confessed that "he had the copy of the said epistle of Blage's wife, a grocer in Chepe, in London," and was committed to the porter's ward until the matter were further tried: whereupon letters were sent to the Recorder of London and William Lock, mercer, to examine the said Blage's wife, and to search her house for the said epistle, and thereupon to send her hither with her confessor, and also the epistle if they could come by it with diligence. Richard Banks, "noted to be the printer of the said invectives," was brought before the council on the 3rd of January, but denied the same, and laid the fault to Robert Redman, deceased, and Richard Grafton; the which Richard Grafton confessing that he had not only printed part of the said invectives, but also had in his keeping a certain seditious epistle in the English tongue, written by Melancthon, contrary to the six articles of the Christian religion, was committed with the porter's wife. The wife of Blage appeared on the 4th of January, and was examined

touching the delivery of a seditious epistle of Melancthon's unto Thomas Cottisford, priest, and confessing as well the manner of the delivery of the said epistle to the said priest, as also declaring that she had it of one Richard Grafton, a printer, was dismissed.

It may be doubted whether after all this correspondence and painstaking inquiry, the Privy Council succeeded in obtaining a copy of the "naughty book," which is now before us, entitled "A Newe Worke concerning both Partes of the Sacrament, etc., by Philip Melancthon, and newly translated out off Latyn." It contains a passing homage to Congregational principles. Melancthon had been driven to admit that in the primitive church the people elected their own pastors; but from the following extract it will be seen that Melancthon regards the general parishioners as a church, and not a distinct Christian community, separated from the world by a distinct confession of their faith in Christ, and of their willingness to obey His commands:—

"The gospel giveth a commandment unto them which have rule over any church, to teach the gospel, to preach remission of sins, and to minister the sacraments; and it giveth them also a certain jurisdiction, namely, a commandment to excommunicate all such as have committed any notable crimes, and to assoil them again when they repent and amend. And it is certain by the judgments of all men, even of our adversaries, that this authority is common by the law of God unto all curates, whether they are called parsons, vicars, or bishops. And for this cause doth S. Jerome, *Libri Symbolici*, teach plainly that in the Scripture all they which have rule over any church be bishops and priests, and he allegeth this text out of Titus. Therefore have I

left thee in Crete, that thou shouldest ordain pastors in every city. And a little after he addeth—‘A bishop must be the husband of one wife,’ etc. Here Peter and John call themselves priests (Presbyters). And S. Jerome saith, ‘Moreover that afterward one was chosen to be over the residue for a remedy of schism or dissension, lest every one taking upon himself authority should destroy the Church of Christ. And even at Alexandria, from the time of Mark the Evangelist until the time of the bishops Esdras and Dionysius, the priests did ever elect and chose a captain among themselves, and the deacons did chose one among them whom they thought to be most diligent, and him they named an archdeacon. For what doth a bishop (the ordering or appointing of other except) but that any priest may do the same.

“Thus S. Jerome teacheth that *the difference between the degree of a bishop and another priest or pastor was made by man’s authority. For else they have like power and authority in the Scripture.* But afterward this one thing, namely, the ordering or admitting of others did set a difference between them; for it was decreed that one bishop should ordain and admit ministers in other churches. But seeing that *the degree of a bishop and of a pastor do not differ by the law of God,* it is evident that if any pastor or curate make any godly ordinance in his church, it is confirmed by the law of God: wherefore, seeing the ordinary bishops be enemies of the Church, and will not do their office as they ought to do, the Church hath her authority. For wheresoever the Church is, there is authority to minister the gospel. Wherefore the *Church must needs retain authority to call, chose, and ordain ministers; and this authority is a gift properly given unto the Church, which no man’s authority can take away from it. As Paul testifieth unto the Ephesians, when he saith—He ascended and gave gifts unto men; and he numbereth among the proper gifts of the Church pastors and preachers; and he saith that they be given to ministers unto the edifying of the body of Christ. Thus I say, Wheresoever the true Church is, there must needs be authority to elect and to admit ministers. And those words of Christ which testify that the keys were given unto the whole Church, and not unto certain persons only, do approve the same.* ‘Wheresoever two or three be assembled in my name, I am in the midst of them,’ etc. Finally, this sentence of Peter doth also confirm the

same. You be a kingly priesthood, which words do pertain unto the true Church, for that only hath a priesthood, and therefore it hath authority to chose and admit ministers. Which thing also the common custom of the church doth testify; *for in old time the common people did chose pastors and bishops.*

“And afterward came the bishop of that diocese or else of the next, which did confirm him that was elect by the laying on of his hands, and their orders giving was no other thing than such an approbation. And in process of time there came up new ceremonies whereof Dionysius maketh mention of divers, but he is but a new and forged author. And afterward every bishop invented his imagination, and so at length this sentence was added, ‘I give thee power and authority to sacrifice for the quick and for the dead,’ etc., by whom no man can tell, for Dionysius maketh no mention of this sentence. Thus it is manifest that the whole Church, that is to say even the common people, have authority by the Word of God to chose and admit ministers or curates. And the wickedness and tyranny of bishops do minister occasion unto sedition and discord. For Paul commandeth that all bishops which teach, defend, and maintain wicked doctrine, wicked and false God’s service, should be reputed as accursed. Thus have I spoken of the ordaining or admitting of ministers, and wherein a bishop and another priest differ after the judgment of S. Jerome. Wherefore it were in vain to entreat of other offices of bishops. We need not to speak ‘neyther’ of the confirmation of children and of the hallowing of bells which in a manner be all the works that bishops do now-a-days.”

After speaking of other abuses in the misappropriation of episcopal revenue, the tract concludes:—

“But let them be sure which do thus defraud the church, that God will scourge and plague them for their wickedness in this behalf. And kings and princes which be the special members of the Church ought to have a respect unto the Church, and to see that all errors be taken away, and that men’s consciences be no longer ensnared, as God exhorteth princes by name, saying, Now ye princes, receive understanding, and be ye learned ye judges of the earth, etc., for the chief care of kings ought to be to set forth the glory of God. Wherefore it is highly against their honour to apply their authority and power to the confirming of

idolatry and other infinite abominable errors, and to assent to the deaths and banishment of the servants of God. And what helpeth it to have many councils, assemblies, or Parliaments, if bishops will suffer nothing to be reformed contrary to their mind. If princes will permit no men to utter their judgments freely without harm or blame. So long as this tyranny remaineth how can the Church be healed. Surely so many as allow the Pope's ordinances and maintain his doctrine, traditions, and invented service to honour God with, they infect and pollute themselves with idolatry and blasphemous opinions, they are guilty also of all the blood of the faithful which the Pope doth persecute. They diminish also the glory of God and hinder the salvation of his people, forasmuch as they confirm errors and abominable wickedness to all their posterity for ever."*

Henry VIII. closed his career in 1547. A few weeks before he made his will, in which he expresses his repentance for his "detestable life," and "instantly *requires*" the blessed Virgin Mary with all the holy company of heaven to pray for him, that he may sooner attain everlasting life after his departure out of this transitory life. Cranmer attended him in his dying moments. Being asked a little before the primate entered his chamber, if he wished to confer with any spiritual adviser, the king answered, "With Cranmer, and not with him as yet. I will first repose myself [he could not bear the thought of dying], and as I find myself I will determine." This was on the 28th of January. When the archbishop arrived at two o'clock in the morning, he found him speechless, but not altogether insensible. He asked him to give him some intimation of his reliance on the merits of the Redeemer. The king grasped his hand strongly, bowed his head and expired.

* Cf. *Libri Symbolici Articuli Smalcaldici*, 351, *seq.*; Hase.

The reformers of Germany at this time enjoyed a kind of truce. Charles V., in order to turn his entire strength against France, promised the Germans that for a short period, until a general council were held, which he engaged to see done, neither party should suffer prejudice on account of existing differences, but that both should enjoy equal laws.

Truce for
the Re-
formers of
Germany.

1544.

This engagement was made at a diet held at Spires, which was opened by the emperor in person, on the 20th of February, 1544.

A voice clear and penetrating was now heard throughout Europe that made a deeper and more permanent impression than any which had spoken before on the momentous question of the Reformation. JOHN CALVIN took the lead with more consistent and well-sustained vigour than either that of Luther or Melancthon. He issued an appeal on the "necessity of reforming the Church," to the Emperor Charles V. and the princes "now holding a diet of the empire at Spires."

Calvin's
appeal.

After a striking introduction, in which he describes the abuses and corruptions in the Church of Rome, he says :—

"A *new Judaism*, as a substitute for that which God has distinctly abrogated, has been reared up by means of puerile extravagances, collected from different quarters; and with these have been mixed up impious rites, partly borrowed from the heathen, and more adapted to some theatrical show than to the dignity of our religion. The first evil here is, that an immense number of ceremonies, which God had by his authority abrogated once for all, have been again revived. The next evil is, that while ceremonies ought to be living exercises of piety, they are vainly occupied with numbers of them that are both frivolous and useless. But by far the most deadly evil of all is, that after

men have thus mocked God with ceremonies of one kind or other, they think they have fulfilled their duty, as admirably as if these ceremonies inclosed in them the whole essence of piety and divine worship.

"Tradition has been substituted for Scripture. They seek salvation by their own merits. Instead of Christ they adore themselves, and dream of possessing life while they are immersed in the profound abyss of death."

After a clear exhibition of the manner in which the sacraments have been caricatured and perverted, he continues :—

"Were I to go over the faults of ecclesiastical government in detail, I should never have done. I will, therefore, only point to some of the grosser sort, which cannot be disguised. And first, *the pastoral office itself, as instituted by Christ, has long been in desuetude*. His object in appointing bishops and pastors, or whatever the name be by which they are called, certainly was, as Paul declares, that they might edify the Church with sound doctrine. According to this view, no man is a true pastor of the Church who does not perform the office of teaching. But, in the present day, almost all those who have the name of pastors have left that work to others. The letting of sacerdotal offices is not less common than the letting of farms. What would we more? *The spiritual government which Christ recommended has totally disappeared*, and a new and mongrel species of government has been introduced, which, under whatever name it may pass current, has no more resemblance to the former than the world has to the kingdom of Christ.

"They maintain that Christ left as a heritage to the apostles the sole right of appointing over churches whomsoever they pleased, and they complain that we, in exercising the ministry without this authority, have with sacrilegious temerity, invaded their province. How do they prove it? Because they have succeeded the apostles in an unbroken series. But is this enough, when all other things are different? It would be ridiculous to say so: they do say it, however. In their elections, no account is taken either of life or doctrine. *The right of voting has been wrested from the people*. Nay, even excluding the rest of the

clergy, the dignitaries have drawn the whole power to themselves, the Roman pontiff again, wresting it from the provincial bishop arrogates it to himself alone. Then, as if they had been appointed to secular dominion, there is nothing they less think of than episcopal duty.

"In short, while they seem to have entered into a conspiracy not to have any kind of resemblance, either to the apostles or the holy fathers of the Church, they merely clothe themselves with the pretence that they are descended from them in an unbroken succession; as if Christ had ever enacted it into a law, that whatever might be the conduct of those who presided over the Church, they should be recognized as holding the places of the apostles, or as if the office were some hereditary possession which He transmits alike to the worthy and the unworthy."

"At a time when the corruption of the world is at its height, there is no order more addicted to all kinds of wickedness. How many priests, pray, are free from whoredom? Nay, how many of their houses are infamous for daily acts of lewdness? How many honourable families do they defile by their vagabond lusts? Laws upon laws have been piled above laws, to be so many snares to the conscience. For they have not confined these laws to matters of external order, but applied them to the interior spiritual government of the soul. And no end was made until they amounted to that immense multitude which now looks not unlike a labyrinth. Indeed, some of them seem framed for the very purpose of troubling and torturing consciences, while the observance of them is enforced with not less strictness than if they contained the whole substance of piety.

"While the Church is oppressed by this tyrannical yoke, any one who dares to say a word against it is instantly condemned as a heretic. To give vent to our grief is a capital offence. And in order to ensure the possession of this insufferable domination, they by sanguinary edicts, prevent the people from reading and understanding the Scriptures, and fulminate against those who stir any question as to their power; this excessive rigour increases from day to day, so that now on the subject of religion it is scarcely permitted to make any inquiry."

It was the object of Luther and the other Re-

formers, to raise "the Church out of its calamitous into somewhat of a tolerable condition":—

"The servants of God," he adds, "never felt themselves obstructed by this empty title of Church, when it was put forward to support the reign of impiety. It is not enough, therefore, simply to throw out the name of church, but judgment must be used to ascertain which is the true Church, and what is the nature of its unity; and the thing necessary to be attended to, first of all, is to beware of separating the Church from Christ its Head."

Calvin insists that the Romish Church will never reform itself. In a general council, he says, honest men would never be allowed to speak, yet with strange inconsistency and extraordinary infatuation, he looks for help to the emperor who

"Among his many noble and heroic virtues, the one worthiest of all admiration is that during these commotions of the empire, he has never allowed himself to be turned aside either from moderation and clemency, or from a religious regard to his word."

The Pope Paul III. was greatly enraged that Charles V. should listen to such an appeal:—

"We have heard," writes his Holiness, August 25, 1544, "of the decrees of the late diet at Spires, and neither the duty of our office nor the affection which we bear to your person, will permit us to remain any longer silent. We remember the fate of Eli. Your majesty is imperiling your own soul; you are bringing destruction upon the Christian faith. We exhort you to return to the ways of your ancestors, and submit yourself to the judgment of Holy Church. Your late edicts, the words which you are reported to have used on the assembly of a national German council, prove that you no longer pay respect to him who alone may summon councils, who alone may pronounce sentence in questions of faith. You have allowed private persons—men who are openly noted of

Letter of
Paul III. to
Charles V.

heresy—to utter their opinion in public. You have permitted the title of the Church to her states to be treated as uncertain, and, slighting the advices of those who have remained obedient, you have restored to honour and dignity, excommunicated apostates, whom once with your own lips you condemned. We cannot believe that those hateful measures had their origin with your majesty. You have been led away by bad councillors, enemies of the Church. We tremble for you. Examine the Scriptures. See there the vengeance which alighted upon those who usurped the functions of the high priest. In a private household every member has his allotted place, in the house of God has his allotted function. *The servant may not rise against his master, and in the Church the master is the priest.*

“It is a vain excuse that your edicts are but for a time—that you wait for a council. You have meddled with things which are not yours to touch. Wicked men may be among priests, but God alone can punish them. Beware in time, you as yet are not given over to evil; but tremble at the future that may await you. Take example from Constantine, who, when desired to arbitrate among the bishops, refused to judge those who had the power to judge all men. You desire a reformation in the Church. It is well. But your place is to assist, not to originate. We, too, desire a reformation. We have laboured for a council. God knows how earnestly. We have failed, but we shall persevere. A council alone would heal all the wounds of Christendom; and for a council there must be peace, which we implore your majesty to grant. *You have been our dearest child, and as a tender parent we counsel you for your own good.* Assume to yourself no functions which do not belong to you. Forbid the diet of the empire to touch questions which only the successor of St. Peter may resolve. Respect the sacredness of the property of the Church. Lay down your arms, and refer your quarrel with France to the arbitration of the council. Revoke your concessions, or, cost what it may, we must ourselves come forward, armed with the authority which God has given us, and act towards you as we shall regret that you have compelled us to act.”*

In his “Remarks on the Letter of Pope Paul III.,” Calvin depicts, with the hand of a master, the vices,

* Sleidan.

hypocrisy, and tyranny of his Holiness. "No doctrine," he says, "shall be received that does not proceed from the tripod of the Roman see. He does not object to the discussion concerning the doctrine and the purifying of the Church, provided he sits judge and the whole controversy is decided by his nod, prescribing the mode of pleading, imposing silence as often as he pleases, and whenever his stamp is heard making all tremble. But this is just the same as if a robber, when accused of the robbery committed by him, were to say that he does not refuse to be judged, but on the condition that the tribunal shall be erected by himself; that he from it shall pronounce judgment in his own cause; that nothing shall be advanced against his will; that nothing offensive to him shall be uttered; that he shall be pressed by no evidence, but shall so regulate the pleading of the cause that he may, without any molestation, secure impunity for his crimes. Here we see the reason why the imperial diet are not competent to hear this cause." Calvin whispers into the ear of the Pope the name of Huss, and says, "*But we are now in another age. The world, which was then blinded, has opened its eyes.*"

CHAPTER XIX.

IN this time of awakening in Europe, Edward VI. came to the throne (1547). All we learn of his private character warrants the opinion that he was the subject of sincere piety, and a careful student of the Word of God. He is said to have "been learned to a miracle;" but whatever the gifts or acquirements of the youthful monarch, he could not take the initiative in public affairs. Practically, the government devolved on the lord protector. Cranmer was charged with the management of ecclesiastical matters. His position was critical, and on the difficult questions that arose he turned for counsel and sympathy to the Continental Reformers—Bucer, Calvin, and Bullinger. A glance at the previous career of these counsellors of the Anglican Reformation will better prepare us to estimate the degree of influence exerted by them at this important juncture. Bucer, with Capito, were the principal representatives of the Reformed Church in Strasburg. In this free city on the Rhine, central from its position to France, Switzerland, Germany, and Holland, the Reformers often met as on neutral

Accession
of Edward
VI.

Cranmer.

Reformed
Church in
Strasburg.

ground. ZELL was regarded as the father of the Reformation in Strasburg. He prepared the way for others who took a more prominent part in the movement. JAMES STURM, distinguished by his learning and Christian zeal, laid the foundation of lasting improvement in the formation of a model public school. CAPITO (*Wolfgang Fabricius*), originally intended for the medical profession, devoted himself subsequently to legal studies at the University of Freiburg, and there made the acquaintance of some of the leading men on both sides of the controversies connected with the progress of the Reformation. His reputation as a scholar led to an invitation from the Bishop of Basle to instruct the clergy, and to an intimate acquaintance with Erasmus. He gave special attention to Hebrew, and to the critical examination of the Old Testament.

About the same time he had friendly conferences with Zwingli, and was the first in Switzerland to publish the writings of Luther. These measures to promote the doctrines of the Reformation were taken by him with great care and circumspection, and his caution was increased by his removal to Mayence, where he was made chancellor of the archbishop, and chosen as companion to the young Emperor Charles V. Whilst sustaining these relations at court, he entered into correspondence with Luther, Melancthon, and Justus Jonas; and twice paid a visit to Wittenberg to recommend a more moderate course. He attempted especially to restrain the impetuosity of Luther, when he denounced the traffic in indulgences. This brought upon him

the stern rebuke of the Saxon Reformer, and to escape his unpleasant relations he returned to Strasburg in 1521, having received a prebend from Leo X. About the same time he received a patent of nobility from Charles V. He soon found that the excitement of the Reformation affected the people of Strasburg. The preaching of Zell and his coadjutors gave an impulse to the movement, and apprehensive for the consequences, Capito recommended Zell to leave the city. For this timidity and vacillation, Zell, like the Reformers at Wittenberg, administered to him reproof, which seems to have led him to greater firmness and decision. Of gentle and loving spirit, he was opposed to the harsh measures adopted to repress the insurgent peasantry, and recommended a more equitable and discriminating policy, in relation to the Anabaptists, than others were inclined to adopt. His training, and the associations formed in the course of his official career, induced a degree of softness and pliability in his character that suited the taste of Cranmer.

BUCER, originally a monk of the Dominican order, was a theological diplomatist of similar caste.

Bucer. He was won to the side of the Reformation by the writings of Luther. He was present at the famous disputation held by Luther at Heidelberg, and from the sympathy he felt with the Reformers it was deemed prudent that he should remain concealed about the time of the Diet of Worms. He appears to have been in communication with the papal party, for we have already seen that at the instance of Glapion, he met Luther at Oppenheim to dissuade him from going to Worms, and

offered to him the protection of Seckengen, in the Castle of Ebernburg. This ancient stronghold is a little more than three miles from Castle of Ebernburg. Kreuznach, in the valley of the Nabe, at the junction of that river with the Alsenz; it was so well fortified that it was deemed to be impregnable, even against the imperial army.

Here Bucer for a season enjoyed security and rest. In the long evenings the valiant knight, disabled by the gout, sat in the corner in his easy chair by the fire, receiving from time to time by trusty messengers, the news from Worms, Wittenberg, Strasburg, and Basle. Around him were the active-minded promoters of the Reformation, who were content to lead for awhile a sedentary life in a state of friendly imprisonment, the fiery Von Hutten, the pensive Œcolampadius, Caspar Aquila, resting awhile after a narrow escape from poison, and the diminutive but decided Schwebel. After leaving the Castle of Ebernburg, Bucer found temporary occupation, first at the court of Count Palatinate, and then at the court of the Archbishop of Mayence, and other places; but his patron and protector being involved in a feud with the Archbishop of Triers, he sought more certain protection at Strasburg. He reached the city (1522, 1523) in a state of great destitution, and was kindly received by Zell. With the sanction of the council he began to preach publicly, and where refused a pulpit he mounted a professor's old wooden chair.

The people "received the Word gladly," and an ordinance was issued by the council, December 1st, 1523, that "in future nothing but the pure

gospel, and what served to increase the love of God and our neighbours, should be preached to the people." In the controversy on the Lord's Supper, Bucer originally adopted the views of Zwingle, but as this gave offence to Luther he endeavoured to modify them, causing umbrage in turn to the Swiss Reformers. We find him in various conferences, alternating in his opinions according to circumstances, and professedly smothering his convictions for the sake of peace, both with the Reformers and the leaders of the papal party, until from the vicissitudes of war he was compelled to relinquish his pastoral charge, and to seek refuge in some other country. After the defeat of the Protestant army at Mühlburg, Strasburg lost its independence, and was only saved from destruction by the perseverance and skill of Sturm and his noble coadjutors. After twenty-six years' public service as a professor and preacher in Strasburg, Bucer left it in haste by a small boat, and went by way of Calais in company with Fagius to join Peter Martyr and other friends in England.

CALVIN, during a period of temporary rejection by the people of Geneva, took the pastoral oversight of a church of French refugees in
Calvin. Strasburg; but on the invitation of the magistrates and citizens returned to Geneva in September, 1541, to carry out his plans of theocratic government, which will come before our attention in another chapter.

Cranmer naturally sought the advice of such men in his attempt to devise some moderate scheme that might unite all parties; not, however, by the force

of conviction, but by the constraint of law. Calvin, writing to the Protector, says: "As I understand, my lord, you have two kinds of mutineers against the king and the estates of the realm: the one are fantastical people, who, under colour of the gospel, would set all to confusion; the others are stubborn people in the superstition of the Antichrist of Rome. These all together do deserve to be well punished by the sword, seeing they do conspire against the king and against God, who had set him in the royal seat."

His letter
to the
Protector.

Acting in accordance with this counsel, the first thing on which the Lord Protector resolved was to insist that all ecclesiastical parties should suspend action of every kind until his own plans were matured. No spontaneous effort for reformation was permitted, lest in their excess of zeal the people might go beyond the proper bounds.

Ecclesiastical action
suspended.

Curates might take down such images as they knew were abused by pilgrimages or offerings to them, but private persons were not permitted to do this. All bishops were ordered to preach in the cathedrals only, and other clergymen in their collegiate or parochial churches, unless they had obtained a special licence from Cranmer himself. The warden and curate of the parish church of St. Martins, in Ironmonger Lane, within the City of London, were brought before the Privy Council, February 10th, 1548, charged by the Bishop of London and the Lord Mayor, with having "of their own hedd and presumption," removed from

Church-
wardens
summoned
before the
Privy
Council,
1548.

the church certain "images, pictures of saints, and also the crucifix," and set up in their places about the church certain texts of Scripture, with the arms of her majesty. The offending wardens and curate meekly explained to the council that the church roof was in such ruin as for fear it would fall on the people's heads, "they were fain to take down in March shall be XII. monthe." The crucifix and other images being so rotten by the time that the church roof was repaired, that they fell to powder and "wer not apte to be set uppe again." It was intimated, moreover, that they were in want of funds. In consideration of their repentance and lowly submission, and for other respects, which did partly mitigate and make the "haynousness of their facte less or then it appeared at the furst face," the Lord Protector and others of the Privy Council pardoned the wardens and curate, but they were held to bail "in XX ^{lbs.} a peace with iiij sureties." They were ordered, moreover, to erect within two days a new image of the crucifix, or at least within that time to cause "somme payntures representing the crucifixe to be set uppe there for the while, and that they shuld by the firste Sonday in Lent next coming at the fardeste," set up there an image of the crucifix.

Cranmer was anxious to prevent commotion. Every step was taken with the utmost caution, and as far as possible discussion was avoided until certain preliminary points should be authoritatively settled. Parliament was asked to repeal the "Six Articles." The cup was restored to the laity, and to enable the ignorant and indolent

Policy of
Cranmer.

clergy to give the people the semblance at least of instruction from the pulpit, Cranmer prepared for their use the Book of Homilies.

Cranmer, in a letter to Bucer, dated October 2nd, 1548, invites him to England. "Our kingdom," he says, "will be a most safe harbour in which, by the blessing of God, the seeds of true doctrine have happily begun to be

His letter
to Bucer,
1548.

sown. Come over, therefore, to us and become a labourer with us in the Lord." The primate also entered into correspondence with Hermann of Cologne, who, with the aid of Melancthon, had elaborated a scheme of church doctrine and discipline adapted to meet the peculiar exigencies of the time. Bucer, reporting progress, says: "Some concessions have been made, both to a respect for antiquity and to the infirmity of the present age. Such, for instance, as the vestments commonly used in the sacrament of the Eucharist; and the use of candles, so also in regard to the commemoration of the dead, and the use of chrism; for we know not to what extent or in what sort it prevails. They affirm that there is no superstition in these things, and that they are only to be retained for a time, lest the people, not having yet learned Christ, should be deterred by too extensive innovations, from embracing His religion, and that rather they may be won over."

Whilst these important and exciting questions were pending, earnest preachers found it difficult to refrain from taking part in the controversy. A proclamation was issued to restrain them.

"His highness is advertised, that certain of the said preachers

so learned have abused the said authority of preaching, and behaved themselves irreverently and without order. Whereby much contention and disorder might rise and ensue in this his majesty's realm. Wherefore his highness, minding to see very shortly one uniform order throughout this realm; and to put an end of all controversies in religion, prohibits all manner of persons, whosoever they be, to preach in open audience in the pulpit, or otherwise, to the intent that the whole clergie, in this mean space, might apply themselves to prayer to Almighty God, for the better atchieving of the same most godly intent and purpose, not doubting but that also his loving subjects in the meantime will occupie themselves to God's honour, with due prayer to the Church, and patient hearing of the godly homilies, heretofore set forth by his highness' injunctions unto them, and so endeavour themself that they may be the more ready with thankful obedience to receive a most quiet, godly, and uniform order, to be had throughout all his said realms and dominions."

On the 24th of November, Cranmer presented his scheme to Parliament, and explained that his object was to build up "a body of doctrine which should be agreeable to Scripture, and that he had collected opinions from all parts of Europe." He had brought over Peter Martyr and Bernard Ochin, and many other continental reformers, Zwinglians and Lutherans, and the result was before them in the Book of Common Prayer.

The debate was watched with great interest. Bartholomew Traheron wrote to Bullinger, December 14th, "A disputation was held on the Eucharist, in the presence of almost the whole nobility; the battle was sharply fought by the bishops. Canterbury, contrary to expectation, maintained your opinion (the Swiss); truth never obtained a brighter victory; it is all over with the Lutherans."

Proclamation against controversy.

Cranmer's scheme presented to Parliament.

Account of the debate.

John Isham, in a letter to Bellingham, says : "Blessed be God all things go well forward in the Parliament House, for they go directly and clearly to extinguish all Popish traditions, and so do set forth the true Word of God, and goodly orders be already advised to stablish the king's majesty's realm in divine service to be used in his Church. I trust they will conclude well in it by the help of the Holy Ghost, without whom such matters cannot be well tried. Part of our bishops have been most stiff in opinion of the reality of his body, that as He was here on earth He should be in the bread, now confess and say that they are not of that opinion. But yet there is hard hold with some to the contrary, who shall relent when it pleaseth God."*

The victory, notwithstanding the auguries of Traheron, was still doubtful. On the 26th of December, Peter Martyr, alarmed by the vigour and determination of the Romish party, writes : "There is so much contention about the Eucharist, that every day the question is discussed among the lords with such disputing of bishops as was never heard. The Commons throng in the Lords' galleries to hear the argument."

On the 7th of January, 1549, the Act of Uniformity was brought into the House of Lords. On the 15th it was passed. Eight bishops, London, Durham, Norwich, Carlisle, Hereford, Worcester, Westminster, and Chichester, the Earl of Derby, Lord Windsor, and Lord Dacres, remaining to the last moment dissentient. These would have no change.

Act of
Uniformity,
1549.

* Irish MSS. B. O.

The faith of the nation was fixed, not in the minds and hearts of the people, but in the Statute-Book. It was enacted, that any clergyman refusing to use the new service-book, or officiating in any other manner, should, for the first offence, be imprisoned six months, and forfeit a year's income; for the second offence, forfeit all his preferments, and be imprisoned one year; and for the third offence, be imprisoned for life. Any person writing or printing against it, was, for the first offence, to be fined ten pounds; for the second twenty pounds; and for the third, to suffer the loss of all his goods, and to be imprisoned for life. The "Articles of Religion," forty-two in number, were subsequently published by the king's authority, May, 1553.

Articles of
religion,
1553.

Nonconformists of various kinds appeared on every side; Gardiner, Bishop of Winchester, was from the first a formidable opponent to Cranmer, and it was deemed necessary to put him under personal restraint. He was bitterly averse to change. "To a multitude," he said, "persuaded of the destruction of images, I would never preach; for as Scripture willeth us, we should cast no precious stones before hogs. Such as be infected with that opinion, they be hogs and worse than hogs. The destruction of images containeth an enterprise to subvert religion and the state of the world with it, especially the nobility. It is a terrible matter to think that this false opinion conceived against images, should trouble any man's head; and such as I have known vexed with that devil, be nevertheless wonderfully obstinate in it." He entered

Noncon-
formists—
Gardiner.

into a long correspondence with the Lord Protector, deprecating the movement of Cranmer, and insisted that no ecclesiastical change should be made during the minority of the king. He was committed to the Fleet on the 14th of October, 1547, for non-compliance with the order of the council. Referring to the occasion he says: "I was heard very well and gently, and methought I showed matter that should have moved, for I showed the two books to be contrary, wherewith they said they were not moved; adding how their conscience agreed not with mine, using many good words to bring me to such conformity as they would have me at. Whereupon, knowing that I know, I could not relent."

Committed
to the Fleet,
1547.

Though Gardiner sent afterwards many to the stake for their conscientious regard to the truth, he could not see the logic of imprisonment in his own case. "My Lord of Canterbury," he writes to the protector, "doth not well to entangle thus your Grace with this matter of religion, and to borrow of your authority the Fleet, the Marshalsea, and the King's Bench, with prisonment in his house, wherewith to cause men to agree, to that it pleaseth him to call religion." He was required to preach a sermon according to a prescribed form of doctrine. He fasted some twenty-four hours in preparing the discourse, and so certainly did his servants expect his liberation that they rode all night from Farnham to London to prepare the palace for his coming home; but he failed to satisfy the council, and was deprived, February 14th, 1551. He remained in prison till the king's death.

Bonner, Bishop of London, though a coarse man, seems in the first instance to have been a little more pliant than his “brother of Winchester.” When the “injunctions” were submitted to him he made a show of resistance. After the restraint of eight days, he repented in the following terms: “Where I did unadvisedly make such a protestation, as now upon better consideration of my duty of obedience, and the ill example that may ensue to others thereof, appears to me neither reasonable, nor such as might stand with the duty of a subject, and forasmuch as the same protestation, at my request, was then by the registrar enacted and put in record, I do now révoke my protestation, and I beseech your lordships that this revocation may likewise be put in the records for a perpetual memory of the truth.”

In July, 1549, Bonner received an order from the crown “to maintain” in a sermon “that vital religion consisted only in prayers to God but the dress or outward costume, which the magistrate might change at his pleasure; that if any man, therefore, persisted any longer in using the Latin services, his devotion was made valueless by the disobedience involved in the practice.”* The test was too severe, and after an inquiry, conducted by a commission, and a trial lasting a month, he was deprived, and remanded to the Marshalsea, October 4th, 1549, where he remained a prisoner until the following reign.

* Domestic. MS. B.O.

The Princess Mary was a decided and unflinching Nonconformist, and contended for the rights of *her own* conscience with the council and with her brother, the king. She refused stoutly to adopt the new service-book. In a letter to the king, February 3rd, 1550, she says, "I would be a suitor to your majesty, that till you were grown to more perfect years, it might stand with your pleasure to stay in matters touching the soul. It is for no worldly respect that I desire it, God is my judge; but *rather than to offend my conscience I would desire of God to lose all that I have and also my life*, and nevertheless live and die your humble sister, and true subject." Writing again, 19th August, 1551, she says: "*Rather than to offend God and my conscience, I offer my body at your will, and death shall be more welcome than life with a troubled conscience.*"

The Princess Mary.

Letter to Edward VI., 1550.

1551.

"It grieveth us much," the king replies, 24th of August, 1551, "to perceive no amendment in you, of that we, for God's cause, your soul's health, *our conscience*, and the common tranquillity have so long desired."

Since the princess could not be moved, the king gave instructions to reduce her household to strict conformity. "If," he directs, "you shall find either any of the priests, or any other person, disobedient to this order, ye shall commit them forthwith to prison, as ye shall think convenient." With high disdain Princess Mary refused to be advised by persons of inferior position.

"About the 8th of September," Foxe tells

us, "Dr. Ridley, then Bishop of London, lying at his house at Hadham, in Hertfordshire, went to visit the Lady Mary, there lying at Haddon, two miles off, and was gently entertained of Sir Thomas Wharton, and other her officers, till it was about eleven of the clock, about which time the said Lady Mary came forth into her chamber of presence, and then the said bishop saluted her grace, and said, that he was come to do this to her grace. She thanked him for his pains, and for a quarter of an hour talked with him very pleasantly, and said that she knew him in the court when he was chaplain to her father, and could well remember a sermon that he made before King Henry, her father, at the marriage of Lady Clinton to Sir Anthony Brown, and so dismissed him to dine with her officers."

Ridley's
visit to the
Princess
Mary.

After dinner, the bishop being called for by Lady Mary, the following colloquy ensued:—

BISHOP.—"Madam, I came not only to do my duty to see your Grace, but also to offer myself to preach before you on Sunday next, if it will please you to hear me."

At this her countenance changed, and after silence for a space, she answered thus:—

MARY.—"My lord, as for this last matter, I pray you make the answer to it yourself."

BISHOP.—"Madam, considering mine office and calling, I am bound in duty to make to your Grace this offer to preach before you."

MARY.—"Well, I pray you, make the answer (as I have said) to this matter yourself; for you know the answer well enough. But if there be no remedy but I must make you answer, this shall be your answer: the door of the parish church adjoining shall be open for you if you come, and *ye may preach if you list, but neither I nor any of mine shall hear you.*"

BISHOP.—“Madam, I trust you will not refuse God’s Word.”

MARY.—“I cannot tell what ye call God’s Word. That is not God’s Word now, that was God’s Word in my father’s days.”

BISHOP.—“God’s Word is all one in all times ; but hath been better understood and practised in some ages than in others.”

MARY.—“You durst not, for your ears, have avouched that for God’s Word in my father’s days, that now you do. And as for your new books, I thank God I never read any of them. I never did, nor ever will do.”

After many bitter words against the form of religion then established, she asked the bishop whether he were one of the council. He answered, “No.” “You might well enough,” said she, “as the council goeth now-a-days,” and added, “My lord, for your gentleness to come and see me, I thank you ; but for your offering to preach before me, I thank you never a whit.”

The nonconformity of the ignorant Roman Catholic population was more openly demonstrative. They broke out in rebellion in Devonshire and Cornwall, and demanded the removal of the Reformers : “*We will have the Bible, and all books of Scripture in English, to be called in again, for we be informed that otherwise the clergy shall not long time confound the heretics.*”

Rebellion in
Devonshire
and Corn-
wall.

No blood of the Roman Catholics was shed during the reign of Edward, but the defenceless Anabaptists were subjected to perpetual imprisonment ; and Joan Bocher, with George van Pace, were burnt at the stake for opinions deemed heretical. But besides these were a considerable number throughout the country who were led by the force of evangelical conviction to meet for worship in a manner different from that enjoined by Act of Parliament. The preaching of the Reformers awakened a thirst for

Joan Bocher
and Pace
burnt at
the stake.

the pure truth of the gospel, for which there was no proper provision in the Establishment. Chaplains were appointed at the court of Edward VI., who had a roving commission. JOHN KNOX, who "rebuked" the nobles "in their faces," and GRINDAL, who complained to the king that his household servants railed against God's true Word and the preaching of the same;—Mr. LEVER, "a godly and fervent man," spoke plainly of "the desolation of the Commonwealth;"—BRADFORD "spared not the proudest, declaring the judgments of the Lord with weeping tears;"—Master HADDON most learnedly opened the causes of the judgments, and JOHN ROGERS, divinity lecturer at St. Paul's, instructed a more attentive audience;—BERNARD GILPIN was a devoted evangelist; but the preacher most remarkable for his searching fidelity was HUGH LATIMER. Knowing the trenchant and homely freedom of his style of pulpit address, Cranmer gave him some special cautions in the letter intimating his appointment:—

"I commend me unto you, etc. These be to certify you of the king's pleasure, how that his grace is contented that ye shall be admitted to preach on all the Wednesdays of the next Lent before him. Whereupon I thought it very expedient, for divers considerations reasonably moving thereto, to admonish you of certain things in no wise to be neglected and omitted on your behalf in time of your preaching, which to observe and follow according to mine advice hereafter to you prescribed, shall at the length redound to your no little laud and praise. First, therefore, take this order (if ye will): reading over the book, ye take for your purpose some processes of Scripture, the gospel, pistill, or any other part of Scripture in the Bible, and the same to expound and declare according to the pure sense and meaning thereof.

Preaching
of the
chaplains
of Edward
VI.

Cranmer's
instructions
to Latimer.

"Wherein, above all things, it will be most convenient that ye do not at all persuade for the defence of your own causes and matters lately in controversy, but that ye rather do seem utterly (to pass over) those your accusations than now in that place any sparke or suspicion of grudge should appear to remain in you for the same. This done, that likewise ye be very circumspect to overpass and omit all manner of speech, either apertly or suspiciously sounding against any special man's facts, acts, manners, or sayings, to the intent your audience have not occasion thereby, namely, to slander your adversaries, which would seem to many that you were void of charity, and so much the more unworthy to occupy that room. Nevertheless, if such occasion be given by the Word of God, let none offence or superstition be unreprehended, specially if it be generally spoken without affectation.

"Furthermore, I would ye should so study to comprehend your matters, that in any condition you stand no longer in the pulpit than an hour, or an hour and a half at the most, for by long expense of time the king and the queen shall, peradventure, wax so weary at the beginning, that they shall have small delight to continue without with you to the end. Therefore, let the effect of the premises take no place in your mind, specially before this circumspect audience, to the intent that you in so doing need not to have any other against misreports of your adversaries; and for further instruction in this behalf, I would you should the sooner come up to London, here to prepare all things in readiness, according to such expectation as is had in you."*

This judicious and well-intended counsel did not repress the freedom of Latimer when once enthroned in the pulpit. He selected Deut. xvii. 14, as the text of his first sermon before the king, to glance at the evils of the preceding reign, and to suggest the remedies required.

"Now," he says, "I here say all things are ended after a godly manner, or else shortly shall be

* Remains, Letter cxxx., Harl. MS. 6148.

Make haste—make haste, sirs, and let us learn to convert, to repent, and amend our lives. So we do not, I fear. I fear, lest for our sins and unthankfulness, a hypocrite shall reign over us.

Latimer's
first sermon
before the
king.

Long have we been servants and in bondage, serving the Pope in Egypt.

God hath given us a deliverer, a natural king; let us seek no stranger of another nation, no hypocrite, which shall bring in all papistry, hypocrisy, and idolatry. Stand ye in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free."

In his sermons to the people, he exposed the idle and ignorant priest, who could hardly read the homilies, and strongly urged them to study the Word of God. As he advanced to the

Sermons
to the
people.

close of his career, his preaching became more evangelical in spirit and in doctrine. "I pray you," he said, "note this: we must first be made good before we can do good; we must first be made just before our works can please God; for when we are justified by faith in Christ, and are made good by Him, then cometh our duty, that is, to do good works, to make a declaration of our thankfulness.

"In times past we were wont to run hither and thither, to this saint and that saint; but it is all but fig-leaves what man can do. Therefore let us stick to Christ, which is the right, perfect, and absolute Saviour, and able to deliver us from all our sins; and not only able to do it, but also willing. He offereth Himself unto us; therefore I say, let us believe in Him, and afterward show our thankfulness through an honest, godly conversation and

living ; so that His holy name may be praised among us, and that they that know Him not as yet may be brought to knowledge of Him through our godly conversation.”*

The people remembered his words ; and though his views of ecclesiastical polity were neither clear nor consistent, the truths he taught in relation to the nature of spiritual religion separated those who cordially received them at once from the superstitions of Popery, and from the formality of mere State-Churchism.

The attention of the people was now directed to the teaching of JOHN HOOPER, a more advanced reformer, and yet of admirable spirit and temper. “Love,” he said to Bucer, “is John
Hooper. the most certain evidence of our justification, and heavenly seal of our acceptance in Christ Jesus ; as John saith, ‘Every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God ; he that loveth not knoweth not God, for God is love.’ Let controversy be settled by the authority of the Word. Let no one defend his opinion with obstinacy, but let us rather return unto the way of truth, and humbly acknowledge our errors, than continue always to go on in error without repentance, lest we should seem to have been in the wrong. Let us bear in mind that we were made for friendship and concord ; that in this miserable age we may, by our mutual kindness, relieve the distresses of each other, and at last reign with Christ in everlasting happiness.”

On the 5th of February, 1550, he received, through Cranmer, the orders of the king and council

* Latimer, II. p. 142.

to preach before the court once a week during the ensuing Lent. He might "freely touch on the duties of individuals." He selected the Book of Jonah as the subject of his discourses. He took occasion to speak with great plainness on the necessity of diligence and fidelity in the work of the ministry. "Into the Church," he said, "we wish to put such ministers as can and would teach the doctrine of the apostles, and that they should not be known by their vestments and shavings, but by their doctrine." Then such as would minister the sacraments gravely, religiously, and simply, as Christ and his apostles did; in baptism nothing to be used but the Word; in the Supper of the Lord to use ceremonies and rites of Christ and his apostles, and all occasions of superstition to be avoided. He urged the necessity of instituting colleges and schools. "Such as have the talent of teaching," he continued, "might rather teach than play; help than hinder; build than pull down; help forth than draw back; promote God than the devil; favour Christ than Antichrist; agree with the king than conspire with the Pope."

Cranmer was deeply offended with Hooper's sermon, and complained of him to the council. It was determined, nevertheless, to force a bishopric upon him, and to compel him practically and openly to deny all he had said respecting the vestments and Popish ceremonies. A lengthened controversy ensued, in the course of which an order was passed in council commanding him "to keep his house, unless it were to go to the

Ordered to
preach
before the
court,
1550.

Cranmer
offended.

Archbishop of Canterbury, or the Bishops of Ely, London, and Lincoln, for counsel and satisfaction of his conscience."

In the time of this forced seclusion, he wrote a confession of his faith, which gave still greater offence. "As concerning the ministers

of the church," says Hooper, in this noble manifesto, "I believe that the church is

Hooper's
confession
of faith.

bound to no sort of people, or any ordinary succession of bishops, cardinals, or such like, but unto the only Word of God; and none of them should be believed but when they speak the Word of God.

I am sorry, therefore, with all my heart, to see the Church of Christ degenerated into a *civil policy*."

"I call the visible church a *visible congregation* of men and women that hear the gospel of Christ, and use his sacraments as He hath instituted them, in the which congregation the Spirit of God worketh the salvation of all be-
lievers. *Unto the which I would all Chris-*

The church
a visible
congrega-
tion.

tian men should associate themselves, although there may happen to be some things to be desired in manner and discipline. They owe it to themselves, study, and diligence to make defences for their true religion against the devil, the flesh, the world, sin, the wisdom of man and superstitious hypocrites, which cease not to pervert and destroy in man the image and work of God. Away! away! I pray you with the opinion, that thinketh a man to owe no more unto himself than to learn by rote, the creed, ten commandments, and paternoster." Cranmer was deeply grieved by these sentiments, but on certain conditions Hooper was liberated, and entered

on the bishopric of Gloucester. He devoted himself to the work of the evangelist, preaching three or four times a day, and could not stir a mile without a numerous attendance. There was abundant necessity for these exertions, for the mass of the people were grossly neglected. Bucer, in a letter to Calvin, says :—

“ There are persons even among the ecclesiastical order, and those, too, who wish to be regarded as gossellers, who hold three or four parishes, and even more, without ministering in any one of them ; but they appoint such substitutes as will be substituted with the least stipend ; and who, for the most part, cannot even read English, and who are in heart mere Papists. The nobility, too, have in many parishes preferred those who have been in monasteries, who are most unlearned and altogether unfit for the sacred office ; and this, merely for the sake of getting rid of the payment of their yearly pension. Hence you may find parishes in which there has not been a sermon for some years. And you are well aware how little can be done for the restoration of the kingdom of Christ by mere ordinances, and the removal of the instruments of superstition.”

The more thoughtful of the people felt their spiritual privation. It was one of the injunctions of Edward VI. that the Word of God should be preached purely and sincerely, in every of their cures, every quarter of the year.” The “ Commonalty” in a remarkable petition, complains bitterly of neglect :—

“ If,” they said, “ further reply be made of those that tender our salvation out a little, saying : ‘ You are sufficiently provided of preaching by your quarterly sermons ;’ we answer that four sermons in the year are as insufficient ordinarily to make us perfect men in Christ Jesus (to which end pastors and doctors are given us) as four strokes with an axe are unable to fell down a mighty oak, or four showers of rain of one hour’s continuance to

Bucer’s
Letter to
Calvin.

Common-
alty com-
plain of
neglect.

moisten the hard dry earth, and to make it fruitful all the year long. Yea, our children will as soon learn the Latin tongue by going to school four hours in a year, as we that be children in understanding the Scripture, shall attain to a sufficient knowledge and reformation of life fit for a Christian man, by hearing four sermons yearly. Because that the one is agreeable to nature, the other quite contrary."

They state that the conversion of the few among them is not by any thing done by their own "silly ministers," but rather, they say, "the providence of God hath cast us into some other place, by occasion of our calling, where we have heard the Word preached; or it may be that God doth bless some men's bare reading, or hearing the Scripture read, or conference with godly learned men, by an extraordinary working of his Spirit, where all other means fail them."

In the light of this deeply interesting document we are prepared to understand what is meant by Strype when he says: "Sectaries appeared now in Essex and Kent, sheltering themselves under the profession of the gospel, of whom complaint was made to the council. These were the first that made separation from the Reformed Church of England, having gathered congregations of their own. The congregation in Essex was mentioned to be at Bocking: that in Kent was at Faversham. Contributions were made for the maintaining of their congregations (1550), and the members of the congregation in Kent went over unto the congregation in Essex to instruct and to join with them, and they had meetings in Kent in divers places beside Faversham." Some were accused before the council of holding dangerous heresies. Amongst these it is said they held that "learned men were the cause of great errors, and that we are not to communicate with sinners."

Strype adds, "Besides these sectaries there was information sent to the court in June 1550, of another sort in Essex; but they, as it seems, were more harmless—namely, certain that came together on other days besides Sundays and holidays to hear sermons, who had preachers that preached to them: and that for aught I perceive, was all their fault; for I do not find any erroneous doctrine laid to their charge."

We have a glimpse of these hidden churches only by the light of the accusation made against them to the council. There is reason to believe that in other parts of the country Christian people sought each other out and formed themselves into distinct religious associations, after the examples given in the New Testament, and guided by its precepts.

There was a large influx of exiles in England at this time from the continent. In the commencement of their struggle with the papacy, the Reformers welcomed with joy the accession of ducal or electoral converts, but when the secular and the spiritual were blended in strange confusion, and they were committed to sanguinary wars, they had reason to repent of the alliances in which they were entangled, though they were often unable or unwilling to trace the desolating evils to their real source. A portentous cloud gathered over the grave of Luther. The Pope and the Emperor resolved in combination to accomplish the ruin of the Protestants. A form of Popery was promulgated by the Emperor, called the *Interim*, to be enforced for general adoption by the sword.

Protestant
refugees in
England.

On the 29th of April, 1550, before leaving Brussels for the Diet of Augsburg, the emperor issued an edict for the government of the Netherlands, in which he avowed his purpose to give the Protestants no quarter. He had done his best, he said, by moderate measures to keep his subjects to the true faith. He had learnt to his sorrow that not only were they infected too deeply to be cured by moderate means, but that foreigners who traded amongst them (the English in particular) were systematically spreading contagion in their towns. Be the consequences what they might, heresy should now come to an end; heretical books should circulate no longer in his dominions; he would have no conventicles, no re-baptizings, no conspiracies, no disputings on doubtful passages in Scripture. The saints should receive their honours; the municipal liberties of the towns should no longer protect evil deeds and evil-doers, and he would trifle no longer in inflicting punishment.

Draconian
degree of
Charles V.
1550.

"Men and women," said the emperor, "who disobey my command, shall be punished as rebels and disturbers of public order. *Women who have fallen into heresy shall be buried alive, and men shall lose their heads, even if they desist from their errors; if they continue obstinate, they shall be burnt; and whichever be their punishment, their goods shall be forfeited.*"

"They shall be incapable of making a will; from the moment of their proved delinquency, their acts as citizens shall be null and void: if man or woman be suspected of heresy, no one shall aid, protect, or shelter him or her; they shall be denounced to the nearest inquisitor, those who have fallen into heresy, who of their own accord have repented and been received to grace, *if they again reason on the subject of their errors*, shall be punished as relapsed; those who are suspected, although there be no proof

against them, shall abjure and do penance. No honour, public office, or dignity whatever, shall be conferred on any man who has once been tainted ; no stranger shall be admitted to a lodging in any inn or private house unless he bring with him a testimony of orthodoxy from the priest of a place where he has resided. The inquisitor-general shall have power to examine into the belief of every man, from the highest to the lowest, and all and any officers of all kinds shall assist the inquisitor at their peril if they neglect or refuse. Those who know where heretics are concealed, shall denounce them, or shall suffer as heretics themselves ; those who give up heretics to justice shall not be liable to punishment, though they be themselves heretics, if they will for the future conform ; and the penalties hereby threatened shall be inflicted and shall not be relaxed, and judges who neglect their duty shall not escape unpunished. Those who are cited and do not appear, shall be assumed to be guilty. Those who intercede for offenders shall suffer as abettors of heresy.”*

The circumstantial minuteness of the edict carried terror into every town in the Low Countries. From city and village streams of refugees poured out towards the ports, and on board vessels bound for England.

On leaving Augsburg, exasperated by his inability to enforce the *Interim* in that city, the emperor resolved on further measures of intimidation. On the 26th of August the Bishop of Arras sent for the Protestant clergy, accused them briefly of disobedience to the imperial rescripts ; and requiring them to take an oath to depart out of Germany, he ordered them at once, and without an hour's delay, to leave their houses and the towns. In vain they appealed to the law, and claimed the privileges of citizens. They were driven out, and Sir Richard Morryson

Further
measures of
intimidation.

* Sleidan, vol. iii. p. 64.

writing from the spot, describes the consequences of this high-handed tyranny :—

“Men do much marvel,” he wrote to the council, “that M. d’Arras durst venture to do this, and more, that he durst do it at this time ; more than all, that the emperor should consent to do a thing that so easily might have turned him, his court, yea his whole city, to trouble : but what doth greedy ambition stick at, or what doth not desperate desire force men to attempt ? The emperor’s friends be fleeting again, his enemies ready to do their worst ; he must, therefore, make friends of Julius III. his surety so long as it lasteth. He must do displeasure to as many as he may. So his friend Julius be thereby pleased. The wound is yet green, and not so felt as perhaps it will be when time and trouble shall lay open the multitude and greatness of these men’s miseries. Men and women are at this present so astounded at the whole of their misery that they have no leisure to peruse the parts thereof. There be few shops but some men or women be seen weeping in them ; few streets but there be men in clumps that look as they had rather do worse than suffer their present thralldom. On Friday last there were about a hundred women at the emperor’s gates, howling and asking in their outcries where they should christen their children ; not christened should be taken as heathen dogs. They would have gone to the emperor’s house, but our Catholic Spaniards kept them out, reviling them. The Papist churches have for all this no more customers than they had ; not ten of the townsmen in some of their greatest synagogues. The churches are locked up. The people sit weeping at home, and do say they will beg among Protestants rather than live in wealth, when they must be Papists.”*

Letter of
Sir Richard
Morryson.

“Upwards of four hundred pastors in Suabia and the circles of the Rhine are driven from their stations. There is but a single officiating minister at this moment at Tübingen who conforms to the book published at Augsburg : it has had the

* Morryson and Wotton to the Council MS. Cypher, Sept. 1 ; State Paper Office, Froude.

effect of driving away all the preachers and pastors.”*

The leadership of the Reformation, after the removal of Luther, necessarily devolved on Melancthon. His reputation for learning, and his excellent temper, rendered him personally acceptable to all parties. There was scarcely a sovereign in Europe who was not anxious to secure his services as a university professor. In the preparation of documents at a conference he was unrivalled. After the exhausting debates of the day, in the course of the night he would prepare a paper exhibiting the points on the side he defended in terms so luminous as to astonish his friends and confound their opponents. In this kind of service he was incessantly occupied, to his own discomfort, and ultimately with doubtful advantage to the cause of truth. Fluent, skilful, and exceedingly lucid in his statements, he was tempted to aim rather at securing the mutual accommodation of conflicting parties, than to assert boldly and decisively great and commanding principles. On some occasions he gave serious umbrage to the friends of the Reformation by the discovery of private correspondence with the representatives, in which, for the sake of peace, he was regarded as a betrayer of the cause. He suffered great loss and inconvenience from the constant demand for his services as a mediator. He longed for quiet and seclusion that he might give more undivided attention to his proper work as a theologian. On one occasion he said : “ I am at one time in my thoughts

Melancthon
the Pro-
testant
leader.

* Pezel Consil. Theol. p. 87.

in France, at another in England, and then again I am here in the midst of our own troubles. If I belonged to myself, I would retire to some solitude instead of living in this turmoil of business." Though he could gain no exemption from the work of discussion at repeated conferences, he felt growing distrust of their influence. Writing to Justinus Goblerus, he says, in reference to the part he had taken in a convention, "We were beset by ambuscades, placed with sufficient skill, which God has dispersed; we have answered with moderation and yet with firmness, and truly these *painted compromises* which some prepared with so much labour, could not heal the public discords. *Let us, therefore, act as becometh saints*, simply and openly. And as to the pontiffs who, according to the gospel, are two horned, let them see what they can effect by their wealth and power. *They will never make faithful compacts with godly churches. Let us pray that God would reform the churches; and let every one in his own place help forward the true reformation.*"*

Painted
compro-
mises.

The siege of Wittenberg and the temporary breaking up of the university was a bitter trial to Melancthon. In the beginning of November, 1546, the hostile army of Maurice and the emperor approached the city, and the inhabitants, filled with terror, fled for safety. "Old men, women, and children," says Melancthon, "were seen departing in a long train of waggons covered with the falling snow." The university was closed, and the students advised to disperse. Some of the pro-

Siege of
Wittenberg.

* Hamburg Cod. Autograph Letters of learned men.

fessors removed to Magdeburg, the only city in which they could enjoy security. Melancthon remained to the very last until the army stood at the gates of the city and demanded its surrender. He then withdrew to Zerbst in Anhalt, about twenty miles distant, with his family, whither he had sent forward his servant to provide lodgings. Here he was by no means safe, and at the solicitation of his colleagues, he set out to join them at Magdeburg, but the authorities of that city were afraid to provoke the displeasure of the emperor by giving him shelter. Melancthon therefore returned to Zerbst, having met on his way, at Dessau, his friend Camerarius, who had fled from Leipsic. In Zerbst he was soon reduced to want. The burgomaster of Nordhausen sent him fifty dollars, which he divided with his friends. From the King of Denmark he received about one hundred and fifty, and subsequently two hundred for himself, Bugenhagen, Justus Jonas, and Luther's widow. At the close of the year 1546, the besieging army withdrew, and Melancthon hastened back; but things were so unfavourable that he stayed only a few days, and he returned to Zerbst. At this time he lost his daughter Anna, "dearer to him," he said, "than his own life."

The prospects of the Elector seemed to brighten, and Melancthon was encouraged to form plans for the restoration of the university at Wurtemberg, when its friends were thunderstruck by the intelligence that on the 24th day of April the emperor and Maurice gained a complete victory over the Elector at Mühlberg, taking him prisoner and condemning him to death. Eber,

Battle of
Mühlberg.

in a letter to Melancthon, writes April 25th, 1547, "Yesterday between four and five o'clock P.M., our cavalry were put to flight at Mühl-^{Letter of Eber, 1547.}berg. In the early part of the evening they reached our city. The two young princes and Otto of Brunswick have returned, but we have not yet received our pious and broken-hearted Elector. Many give out that he is taken prisoner. I congratulate you and your colleagues that you are removed from these scenes of danger. It was unwise in me not to escape when I could."

Melancthon said in a letter to his friend Cruciger, "If I could shed as many tears as there are drops of water in the Elbe, I could not weep away ^{Grief of Melancthon} the sorrow which I feel at the subjugation of our prince, who was always the friend of the Church and zealous for the right." We do not follow the course of the war, with its strange vicissitudes, until the emperor was defeated, and the Protestants secured the peace of Passau; we have taken this collateral glance at contemporaneous events, only to make the state of matters clear in their relation to the course of Protestantism in England.

The ecclesiastical machinery, constructed at so much cost of labour, and, we may add, of principle, absolutely broke down. Melancthon, who had looked to the emperor as the last hope of Christendom, had now to defend himself as a Separatist. JOHN ROGERS translated his treatise against the *Interim*, and circulated it in England:—

"Although," Melancthon says, "threatened with war and destruction, we must still adhere to the Word of God, and not

deny acknowledged truth. As to the danger incurred by the defence of what is preached in our churches, and we know to be truth, we will entrust the affair to God. *The Church is a congregation, or assembly of persons who profess real faith in Christ*, and no man, ought to separate himself from the true Church; but the question is, who compose it? Separation from the Church is charged upon us as a crime of the greatest magnitude; but if the adversaries of truth continue obstinate, and thus occasion discord and debate, surely they are guilty before God, and not the poor and pious souls who receive or preach it."

Distressing as were the immediate effects of the *Interim*, it seems to have had an indirect influence of a salutary nature in sifting the churches. Bucer wrote from London, August 14th, 1549, to Albert Hardenberg:—

"So many among the Churches throughout Germany, *oppressed as they are, and scarcely able to support themselves, are everywhere turning to the Lord, and seriously repenting, and exercising discipline, and are instant in prayer*, that I entertain great hope that God, in mercy, will speedily assuage these storms and tempests. We needed to be tried. Our worthy old man of Cologne (Hermunde de Wied) still stands out for the Lord, as do also many private individuals; but *there remains not one single state, or sovereign, or count, or nobleman in Upper Germany who has not bowed his knees to the Interim*, though every one adopts as few of its provisions as possible, and the bishops have no persons whom they can substitute in the place of our ministers. Our friends, after having for a long time deprecated that ferment, at length offered to receive such portions of the *Interim* as they could with a good conscience, and that they would leave the rest to be arranged by the bishop. But as he attempted to enforce beyond what the *Interim* requires, the time has so far been protracted, that nothing, I hope, belonging to Antichrist is as yet re-established. I fear, however, that our friends will not be able to make any longer delay. May the Lord be present with so many excellent persons in those parts! The servants of

mammon have there prevailed by their votes and decrees over the servants of the Lord. Timidity, too, and a worldly prudence, unworthy of Christians, has overthrown some." Bucer in the same letter says: "There are, in England, from six to eight hundred Germans, all godly men, and most anxious for the Word of God. They requested me and my friend Fagius to provide for them some faithful preacher." Wolfgang Musculus, referring to the general population, says: "There are more than five thousand Germans here."*

Many conscientious men, unwilling to dishonour their profession by sinful compliance with observances enjoined by imperial authority, and yet unprepared to encounter the trials involved in the course of open but calm resistance, sought an asylum in other countries, where they might worship in peace, and hold the faith in a pure conscience.

JOHN A'LASCO was permitted, in 1550, to gather a church of Christian exiles in London, and the conventual church of Austin Friars was assigned to him by royal charter. A'Lasco was a Polish nobleman, eminent for learning, and raised for his attainments to episcopal rank at Vesprine, in Hungary. Travelling in Switzerland he became acquainted with Zwingle, and from him received the principles of the Reformation. With characteristic decision he relinquished preferment, forsook his native land, and devoted himself to the preaching of the gospel. He gathered a church at Emden, in Friesland, and for ten years he laboured with great diligence to diffuse the truth in that country. In common with the rest who adhered to the cause of the Reformation in Germany and the

John
A'Lasco,
1550.

* Original Letters of the Reformers. Parker Society.

Low Countries, he was compelled by the *Interim* to seek an asylum in some other territory.

In accepting the accommodation offered to him by Edward VI., he stipulated for a larger measure of freedom than Protestants were allowed in the English Church, and though a stranger, he contended earnestly for the removal of the vestiges of Popery from the national establishment. "When I was called," A'Lasco tells us, "by King Edward VI., and when certain laws of the country stood in the way, so that the public acts of divine worship used under Popery could not be immediately purged out, which the king himself desired; and when I was earnest for the foreign churches, it was at length his pleasure that the public rites of the English churches should be reformed by degrees, as far as could be got down by the laws of the country; but that strangers who were not strictly bound to these laws in this matter, should have churches granted them, in which they could freely regulate all things wholly according to apostolical doctrine and practice, without any regard to the rites of the country; that by this means, the English churches also might be excited to embrace the apostolical purity, by the unanimous consent of all the estates of the kingdom."

This object was not secured without difficulty. Myconius writing to Bullinger, August 28th, 1550, says:—

"We are altogether exempted by the letters patent of the king and council, from their jurisdiction. To each church (I mean the German and French) are assigned by the king two ministers of the Word (among whom is my unworthy self), over

whom has been appointed superintendent, the most illustrious John A'Lasco, by whose aid alone, under God, we foreigners have arrived at our present state of pure religion. Some of the bishops, and especially the Bishop of London, with certain others, are opposed to our design; but I hope their opposition will be ineffectual." "I began to preach," he writes, "in this church, 21st Sept., 1550, and the German congregation is now so numerous that the place could not hold them. When we perceived the happy condition of our church, a consultation took place among our countrymen as to the establishment of a regular government. Therefore, on the 5th of this month, we appointed four elders, according to the apostolic ordinance, to assist the minister, not indeed in the ministry of the Word, but in the conservation of doctrine and morals in the Church. The most illustrious John Utenovious is one of the number. They were inaugurated with public prayer and imposition of hands. On the 12th of this month, October, we in like manner ordained four deacons to take charge of the poor and exiled for Christ's sake. The same ceremony was altogether adopted which the apostles observed with their deacons. The multitude of believers (praised be God) is increasing every day. Should we be permitted, by God's blessing, to go on in this way for some years, we shall attack our Flanders with fiery darts, and I hope take it by storm! that Antichrist, being put to flight, or at least weakened, our Saviour may reign there."

Letter of
Myconius
to Bullin-
ger, 1550.

Hooper took a deep interest in the church, and at its formation spent a whole day with A'Lasco at Austin, in friendly converse with the members, August 14th, 1551. Myconius reports: "We have established in our church a collation of Scripture in the German language, in which are discussed the sermons of the preceding week, to preserve the purity of doctrine; and this arrangement, in some measure, represses the heretical, and confirms the ignorant in the Chris-

Formation
of the
Church at
Austin
Friars.

Report of
Myconius,
1551.

tian doctrine. One thing is still wanting in our church, namely, the administration of baptism and the Lord's Supper. Liberty is granted by the royal licence; but we are prevented by the malevolence of certain individuals from the enjoyment of so great a benefit." Ridley sternly opposed the admission of any rites different from the rites of the Church of England; but John A'Lasco persevered until the concession was gained. Similar privileges were granted to a company of exiles who came from Strasburg and settled at Glastonbury, under the ministry of Valerian Pullan.

Opposition
of Ridley.

French
Church at
Glaston-
bury.

Here were free churches exempted from the control of the Anglican establishment, taking the Word of God for their guide, electing their own pastors, and maintaining the order and discipline, so far as they could judge, according to the apostolical model. The institution of such a Christian society, though under some disabilities, and surrounded by violent opponents, indicates a great advance toward a more general adoption of the primitive church polity.

CHAPTER XX.

THE accession of Mary (July 18th, 1553) to the throne inaugurated a reign of terror, into the details of which we do not propose to enter. With her gloomy husband, Philip of Spain, aided by the priests, she made it her constant business to exterminate what was called heresy. Preachers were employed to denounce the Reformation and its promoters. The people in their excitement became riotous at St. Paul's Cross, and were placed under severe restraint. The leading Reformers were seized and kept in prison until laws could be framed in order to put them to death. The clergy of the Lower House of Convocation in 1554 petitioned for the destruction of all the English Prayer-Books and the renewal of the act for the burning of heretics.* An Act to revive the Lollard Statutes was passed at the close of the same year.

Accession
of Mary,
1553.

Petition of
Convoca-
tion, 1554.

The "Gospellers," the successors by another name of the simple and earnest Christian confessors, whose course we have traced all along, continued to meet.

There was a considerable congregation of these

* Wilkins' Concilia.

devoted people, we are told, at Stoke, in Suffolk,
 Congregation at Stoke. who when excommunicated by the bishop left the town and escaped all the days of Queen Mary. But the congregation best known was that which met in Bow Churchyard.

Congregation at Bow Churchyard. Hooper suggested that they should form themselves into a society for mutual edification.

"It is told me," he writes, "that the wicked idol of the mass is established again by a law passed in the Parliament House.

Hooper's letter. *There is no better way to be used in this troublesome time for your consolation than many times to have assemblies together of such men and women as be of your religion in Christ,* and there to talk and renew among yourselves the truth of your religion; to see what ye be by the Word of God, and to remember what ye were before ye came to the knowledge thereof, to weigh and confer (compare) the dreams and false lies of the preachers that now preach, with the Word of God that retaineth all truth, and by such talk and familiar resorting together, ye shall better find out all their lies that go about to deceive you, and also both know and love the truth that God hath opened to us. It is much requisite that the members of Christ comfort one another, make prayers together, and confer with one another, so shall ye be the stronger, and God's Spirit shall not be absent from you, but in the midst of you, to teach you, to comfort you, to make you wise in godly things, patient in adversity, and strong in persecution. Ye see how the congregation of the wicked by helping one another, make their wicked religion and themselves strong against God's truth and his people.

"Be glad that ye may be counted worthy soldiers for this war; and pray to God when ye come together, that He will use and order you and your doings to these three ends, which ye must take heed of; the first, that ye glorify God, the next that ye edify the Church and congregation, the third that ye profit your own souls. God bless you, and pray for me as I do for you. Out of the Fleet, by your brother in Christ." *

On the 1st of January, 1554 (5) the congre-

* Writings of Hooper, p. 589, *seq.* Parker Society.]

gation were surprised at worship, and one of the members wrote to Hooper to report the circumstance :—

“My duty humbly remembered, you hear of a godly company imprisoned, which were taken upon New Year’s night. Yet, notwithstanding, forasmuch as you know not perfectly how nor wherefore; you shall understand that being upon their knees in ending of prayer, wherein they gave God thanks, prayed for the magistrates and estates of the realm, and required things necessary at his bountiful hands. Two of my Lord Chancellor’s men (as I am informed) came first unto the chamber where they were in Bow Churchyard, and immediately followed the sheriff with others, who commanded them all to stay in the king and queen’s name, whereunto they humbly obeyed: for they came not thither weaponed to conspire, or make any tumult, but only like Christians, Christianly to pray, and to be instructed in the vulgar tongue by the reading and hearing of God’s Word, as their consciences did enforce them, without the displeasure of God so to do. I say, that they might without the offence of God, quietly pray together as they be taught by His Word, there assembled a godly company together, to the number of thirty, divided and sent to both counters, whereat they yet remain, and with Master Chambers, Master Monger, and the rest in the counter at Bread Street, where I was yesterday, who (God be thanked) be strong and do rejoice that for well-doing they are imprisoned; not doubting but that, as God hath vouchsafed to accept them worthy to sustain imprisonment for his sake, so He will strengthen them rather to suffer death than to deny his truth; as the Lord knoweth who assist you with his Holy Spirit, that unto the end you may persevere in his truth; unto whose tuition in my poor prayer I humbly commend you; 3rd of Jan. 1554 (5). M. Monger, M. Sh——, and the rest in the Counter do pray for you most heartily.

Letter to
Hooper
from a
member of
the Church.

“God’s peace be with you, Amen. 4th of Jan. 1554 (5).”

Hooper replied :—

“The grace of God be with you, Amen. I perceive by your letter how that, upon New Year’s day at night there were taken

a godly company of Christians while they were praying. I do rejoice in that men can be so well occupied in this perilous time, and fly unto God for remedy by prayers as well for their own lacks and necessities, as also charitably to pray for them that persecute them. So doth the Word of God command all men to pray charitably for them that hate us, and not to revile any magistrate with words, or to mean him evil by force or violence. They also may rejoice that in well-doing they were taken to prison. Wherefore I have thought it good to send them this little writing of consolation, praying God to send them patience, charity, and constancy in the truth of his most holy Word. Thus fare you well, and pray to God to send you his true Word unto this realm again amongst us, which the ungodly bishops have now banished. 4th Jan. 1554 (5)."

To the brethren in prison Hooper wrote more at length:—

"The grace, favour, consolation, and aid of the Holy Ghost be with you now and for ever. So be it. Dearly beloved in the Lord, ever sithence your imprisonment, I have been marvellously moved with great affections and passions, as well of mirth and gladness as of heaviness and sorrow. Of gladness in this, that I perceived how ye be bent and given to prayer, and invocation of God's help in these dark and wicked proceedings of men against God's glory. I have been sorry to perceive the malice and wickedness of men to be so cruel, devilish, and tyrannical, to persecute the people of God for serving of God, for saying and hearing of the holy psalms and the Word of eternal life. These cruel doings do declare that the Papist's church is more bloody and tyrannical than ever was the sword of the Ethnics and Gentiles. When I heard of your taking, and what ye were doing, wherefore and by whom ye were taken, I remembered how the Christians in the primitive church were used by the cruelty of unchristened heathen in the time of Trajan. The instructions of Trajan to Pliny were, that the Christians *should not be sought after*, but if they were brought before him and convicted of being Christians, they should be punished—about seventy-seven years after Christ's ascension into heaven; and how the Christians were persecuted very sore, as though they had been traitors and movers of sedition. Whereupon the

Gentile Emperor, Trajan, required to know the true cause of Christian men's trouble. A great learned man called Pliny Secundus, wrote unto him, and said it was because the Christians said certain psalms before day unto one called Christ, whom they worshipped for God. When Trajan the Emperor understood it was for nothing but for conscience and religion, he caused by his commandments everywhere that no man should be persecuted for serving of God ! Lo ! a Gentile and heathen man would not have such as were of a contrary religion punished for serving of God ; but the Pope and his church hath cast you into prison, being taken even doing the work of God, and one of the excellent works that is required of Christian men ; that is to wit, whilst ye were in prayer, and not in such wicked superstitions as the Papists use, but in the same prayer that Christ hath taught you to pray ; and in his name only ye gave God thanks for that ye have received, and for his sake ye ask for such things as ye want. O glad may ye be that ever ye were born to be apprehended whilst ye were so virtuously occupied.

“Blessed be they that suffer for righteousness' sake ; for if God had suffered them that took your bodies then to have taken your life also, now had ye been following the Lamb in perpetual joys, away from the company and assembly of wicked men. But the Lord would not have you suddenly so to depart, but reserveth you gloriously to speak and maintain his truth to the world. Be ye not careful what ye shall say, for God will go out and in with you, and will be present in your hearts and in your mouths to speak in wisdom, although it seemeth foolishness to the world. He that hath begun this work in you confirm, strengthen, and continue you in the same to the end ; and pray unto Him that ye may fear Him only that hath power to kill both body and soul, and to cast them into hell fire. Be of good comfort. All the hairs of your heads be numbered, and there is not one of them can perish except your heavenly Father suffer it to perish. Now ye be even in the field, and placed in the fore front of Christ's battle. Doubtless it is a singular favour of God, and a special love of Him towards you, to give you this foreward and pre-eminence, and a sign that He trusteth you before others of his people. Wherefore, dear brethren and sisters, continually fight this fight of the Lord. Your cause is most just and godly : ye stand for the true Christ (who is, after the flesh, in heaven),

and for his true religion and honour, which is amply, sufficiently, and abundantly contained in the Holy Testament, sealed with Christ's own blood. How much ye be bound to God, to put you in trust with so holy and just a cause. Remember what lookers upon ye have to see and behold you in your fight. Even God and all his holy angels, who be ready alway to take you up into heaven, if ye be slain in this fight. Also ye have standing at your backs all the multitude of the faithful, who shall take courage, strength, and desire to follow such noble and valiant Christians as ye be. Be not afeard of your adversaries, for He that is in you is stronger than he that is in them.

"Your pains be not so great as hereafter your joys shall be. Read the comfortable chapters to the Romans, viii., x., xv., Heb. xi., xii., and upon your knees thank God that ever ye were accounted worthy to suffer anything for his name's sake. Read the second chapter to St. Luke's gospel, and there ye shall see how the shepherds that watched upon their sheep all night, as soon as they heard that Christ was born at Bethlehem, by and by they went to see Him. They did not reason nor debate with themselves who should keep the wolf from the sheep in the meantime, but did as they were commanded, and committed their sheep unto Him whose pleasure they obeyed. So let us do now when we are called, and commit all other things unto Him that calleth us. He will take heed that all things shall be well. He will help the husband; He will comfort the wife; He will guide the servants; He will keep the house; He will preserve the goods; yea, rather than it should be undone, He will wash the reches and rock the cradle. Cast, therefore, all your care upon God, for He careth for you. Besides this, ye may perceive, by your imprisonment, that your adversaries' weapons against you be nothing but flesh, blood, tyranny; *for if they were able they would maintain their wicked religion by God's Word, but for lack of that they would violently compel such as they cannot persuade,* because the holy Word of God and all Christ's doings be clean contrary unto them. I pray you pray for me, and I will pray for you; and although we be asunder after the world, yet are in Christ (I trust) for ever joining in the Spirit, and so shall meet in the palace of the heavenly joys after this short and transitory life is ended."

The leading Reformers in prison had time to

review their position, and to examine, in the light of Scripture, the questions earnestly controverted by them for the maintenance of prelatical power. They began to realize for themselves the "communion of saints," and enjoyed, by the favour of the gaoler, many secret opportunities for fraternal conference and mutual prayer. They enjoyed in consequence far more unity in the Spirit, and cherished for each other warmer affection. Ridley, who had been the antagonist of Hooper, wrote to him in the following terms:—

"But now, my dear brother, forasmuch as I understand by your works, which I have yet but superficially seen, that we thoroughly agree and wholly consent together in those things which are the grounds and substantial points of our religion, against the which the world so furiously rageth in these our days, howsoever in time past, in smaller matters and circumstances of religion, your wisdom and my simplicity (I confess) have in some points varied. Now, I say, be you assured that, even with my whole heart (God is my witness) in the bowels of Christ, I love you, and in truth, for the truth's sake which abideth in us, and (as I am persuaded) shall, by the grace of God, abide with us for evermore; and because the world, as I perceive, brother, ceaseth not to play his pageant, and busily conspireth against Christ, our Saviour, with all possible force and power, exalting high things against the knowledge of God, let us join hands together in Christ; and if we cannot overthrow, yet to our power, and as much as in us hath, let us shake those high things, *not with carnal, but with spiritual weapons*; and withal, brother, let us prepare ourselves to the day of our dissolution, whereby, after the short time of this bodily affliction by the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, we shall triumph together with him in eternal glory."

Reformers
in prison.

Letter of
Ridley to
Hooper.

Excommunicated by the highest authorities of the Episcopal Church, they had no place but in the

Church in prison, consisting of Christian confessors, within a few steps of the Church of the redeemed in heaven. Latimer had dreaded the thought of "segregation," and at one time he earnestly disclaimed all connection with Luther and Melancthon.

Excommu-
nicated by
the Episco-
pal Church.

But now he says: "The number of the criers under the altar must needs be fulfilled. If we be *segregated* thereunto, happy we be; that is the greatest promotion that God giveth us in this world to be such Philippians, to whom it is given not only to believe, but also to suffer."* "The cause," said Ridley, "why I do *dissent* from the Romish religion is not any study of vain glory or of singularity, but of *conscience* of my bound duty towards God and towards Christ's Church."† The two imprisoned martyrs wrote their thoughts on sheets of paper that were passed to each other alternately.

Latimer
becomes a
Dissenter.

Dialogue of
Latimer
and Ridley.

A third imaginary person was introduced, called "Antonian," to state the objections of the Romish party.

ANTONIAN.—"But you know how great a crime it is to *separate yourself from the communion or fellowship of the Church*, and to make a schism or division.

RIDLEY.—"I know that the unity of the Church is to be retained by all means, and the same to be necessary to salvation. But I do not take the mass, as it is at this day, for the communion of the Church, but for a Popish device, whereby both the commandment and institution of our Saviour Christ, for the oft frequenting of the remembrance of his death, is eluded, and the people of God are miserably deluded.

LATIMER.—"I remember, that Calvin beginneth to confute the *Interim* after this sort, with this saying of Hilary, 'The name of

* Ridley's Works, p. 116.

† Ibid., p. 366.

peace is beautiful, and the opinion of unity is fair; but who doubteth that to be the true and only peace of the Church which is Christ's?' I would you had that little book, there should you see how much is to be given to unity. St. Paul, when he requireth unity, he joineth straight withal *secundum Jesum Christum*, 'according to Jesus Christ,' no further. Diotrephes now of late did ever harp upon unity, unity. 'Yea, sir' (quoth I), 'but in verity, not in Popery. Better is a diversity than a unity in Popery.' I had nothing but scornful jeers, with commandment to the Tower.

ANTONIAN.—"Consider unto what dangers you cast yourself, if you forsake the Church. And you cannot but forsake it, if you refuse to go to mass. For the mass is the sacrament of unity; without the ark there is no salvation. The Church is the ark, and Peter's ship. Ye know his saying well enough: 'He shall not have God to be his Father, which acknowledgeth not the Church to be his mother.' Moreover, 'without the Church, saith Augustine, 'be the life never so well spent, it shall not inherit the kingdom of heaven.'

RIDLEY.—"The holy Catholic or universal Church, which is the communion of saints, the house of God, the city of God, the spouse of Christ, the body of Christ, the pillar and stay of the truth; this Church I believe, according to the Creed; this Church I do reverence and honour in the Lord. But *the rule of this Church is the Word of God*, according to which rule we go forward unto life. 'And as many as walk according to this rule,' I say with Paul, 'peace be upon them and upon Israel, which pertaineth unto God.' *The guide of this Church is the Holy Ghost. The marks whereby this Church is known unto me in this dark world, and in the midst of this crooked and forward generation, are these, the sincere preaching of God's Word; the due administration of the sacraments; charity; and faithful observing of ecclesiastical discipline according to the Word of God.* And that Church or congregation, which is furnished with these marks, is in very deed that heavenly Jerusalem, *which consisteth of those that be born from above.* This is the mother of us all; and, by God's grace, I will live and die the child of *this Church*. Forth of this (I grant) there is no salvation, and, I suppose, the residue of the places objected are rightly to be understood of this Church only. 'In times past,' saith Chrysostom, 'there were many ways to

know the Church of Christ, that is to say, by good life, by miracles, by chastity, by doctrine, by ministering the sacraments. But from that time that heresies did take hold of the churches. It is only known by the Scriptures which is the true Church. They have all things in outward show, which the true Church hath in truth. They have temples like unto ours, etc. And in the end concludeth, 'Wherefore only by the Scriptures do we know which is the true Church' (Hom. 49 on Matthew). So that while they say, 'The mass is the sacrament of unity,' I answer, the bread which we break, according to the institution of the Lord, is the sacrament of the unity of Christ's mystical body. 'For we, being many, are one bread and one body, forasmuch as we are all partakers of one bread.' But in the mass, the Lord's institution is not observed; for we be not all partakers of one bread, but one devoureth all, etc. So that, as it is used, it may seem a sacrament of singularity, and of a certain special privilege for one sect of people, whereby they may be discerned from the rest, rather than a sacrament of unity, wherein our knitting together in one is represented.

LATIMER.—"Yea, what fellowship hath Christ with Antichrist? Therefore is it not lawful to bear the yoke with Papists. 'Come forth from among them, and *separate yourselves* from them, saith the Lord.' It is one thing to be the Church indeed, another thing to counterfeit the Church.

ANTONIAN.—"That Church which you have described unto me is invisible, but Christ's Church is visible and known. For else why would Christ have said, *Dic ecclesiæ*, 'Tell it unto the Church'? For He hath commanded in vain to go unto the Church, if a man cannot tell which is it.

RIDLEY.—"The Church which I have described is visible; it hath members, which may be seen, and also I have before declared by what marks and tokens it may be known. But if either our eyes are so dazzled that we cannot see, or that Satan hath brought such darkness into the world that it is hard to discern the true Church; that is not the fault of the Church, but either of our blindness, or of Satan's darkness. But yet in this most deep darkness there is one most clear candle, which, of itself alone, is able to put away all darkness. 'Thy word is a candle unto my feet, and a light unto my steps.'

ANTONIAN.—"The Church of Christ is a Catholic or Universal

Church, dispersed throughout the world. This Church is the great house of God. In this are good men and evil mingled together, goats and sheep, corn and chaff. It is the net which gathereth all kinds of fishes. This Church cannot err, because Christ hath promised it his Spirit, which shall lead it into all truth, and that the gates of hell shall not prevail against it; that He will be with it unto the end of the world. Whatsoever it shall loose or bind upon earth shall be ratified in heaven. This Church is the pillar and stay of the truth; this is it for the which St. Augustine saith, he believeth the gospel. But this universal Church alloweth the mass; because the more part of the same alloweth it.

RIDLEY.—“I grant that the name of the Church is taken after three divers manners in the Scripture (sometimes for the body of all spiritual believers, sometimes for that outward society which hath the sacraments, sometimes, though rarely, for the synagogue of Satan; this last-named Church hath the greatest power in this world, even in Christendom). But if any man will stiffly affirm that universality doth so pertain unto the Church, that whatsoever Christ hath promised to the Church, it must needs be understood of that, I would gladly know of the same man where that universal Church was, in the times of the patriarchs and prophets, of Noah, Abraham, and Moses (at such times as the people would have stoned him), of Elias, of Jeremy, in the time of Christ, and the dispersion of the apostles in the time of Arius, when Constantine was emperor, and Felix Bishop of Rome, succeeded Liberius? It is worthy to be noted that Lyra writeth upon Matthew, ‘The Church,’ saith he, ‘doth not stand in men, by reason of their power or dignity, whether it be ecclesiastical or secular. For many princes and Popes, and other inferiors have been found to have fallen away from God.’ *Therefore the Church consisteth in those persons in whom is true knowledge and confession of the faith and of the truth.*”

Continual and active communication was kept up between the martyrs in prison and the Christian people who still met in private for religious worship. The letters of Latimer, Ridley, Bradford, Philpot, and the rest of those who were in bonds, and their

trials awakened the deepest sympathy. The courts to which these venerable men were brought up for examination were crowded with eager listeners, who never forgot the lessons given by them in reply to their inquisitors.

Communion of
Christian
people with
themartyrs
in prison.

Take a single instance, that of Latimer. When the bailiffs brought him as their prisoner into court on the second day, "He bowed his knee down to the ground, holding his hat in his hand, having a kerchief on his head, and upon it a night-cap or two, and a great cap (such as townsmen use, with two broad flaps to button under the chin) wearing an old thread-bare Bristowe frieze gown, girded to his body with a penny leather girdle, at the which hanged by a long string of leather his Testament, and his spectacles without case, depending about his neck upon his breast."

Latimer in
court.

The Bishop of Lincoln opened the proceedings :

"Master Latimer," he said, "you shall understand, that I and my lords here have a commission from my Lord Cardinal Pole's Grace, Legate a latere, to this realm of England from our most reverend father in God, the Pope's Holiness, to examine you upon certain opinions and assertions of yours, which you as well here, openly in disputations, in the year of our Lord, 1554, as at sundry and at divers other times did affirm, maintain, and obstinately defend. In the which commission be specially two points : the one which we must desire you is, that if you shall now recant, revoke, and disannul these your errors, and together, with all this realm, yea, all the world, confess the truth, we, upon due repentance of your part, shall receive you, reconcile you, acknowledge you no longer a strayed sheep, but adjoin you again to the unity of Christ's Church, from the which you, in the time of schism fell ; so that it is no new place to the which I exhort you. I desire you but to return thither from whence

you went. Consider, Master Latimer, that without the unity of the Church is no salvation, and in the Church can be no errors. Therefore, what should stay you to confess that which all the realm confesseth, to forsake that which the king and queen, their majesties have renounced, and all the realm recanted? It was a common error, and it is now of all confessed. It shall be no more shame to you than it was to us all. Consider, Master Latimer, that within these twenty years this realm, also with all the world, confessed one Church, acknowledged in Christ's Church a head, and by what means, and for what occasion it cut off itself from the rest of Christianity, and renounced that which, in all times and ages was confessed, it is well known, and might be now declared upon what good foundation the See of Rome was forsaken, save that we must spare them that are dead, to whom the rehearsal would be opprobrious." After much more to the same effect, the bishop continued: "But if you shall stubbornly persevere in your blindness; if you will not acknowledge your errors; if you, as you now stand alone, will be singular in your opinions; if by schism and heresy, you will divide yourself from your Church, then must we proceed to the second part of our commission, which we would be loth to do, that is, not to condemn you, for that we cannot do (that the temporal sword of the realm, and not we will do), but to *separate you from us, acknowledge you to be none of us; to renounce you as no member of the Church; to declare that you are filius perditionis, a lost child; and as you are a rotten member of the Church, so to cut you off from the Church, and so to commit you to the temporal judges, permitting them to proceed against you according to the tenour of their laws.* Therefore, Master Latimer, for God's love consider your estate. Remember you are a learned man, you have taken degrees in the school, borne the office of a bishop; remember you are an old man—spare your body, accelerate not your death, and specially remember your soul's health, quiet of your conscience. Consider that, if you should die in this state, you shall be a stinking sacrifice to God; for it is the cause that maketh the martyr, and not the death. Consider that, if you die in this state, you die without grace; for without the Church can be no salvation. Let not vain glory have the upper hand; humiliate yourself, captivate your understanding, subdue your reason; submit yourself to the determination of the Church; do not force us

to do all that we may do ; let us rest in that part we most heartily desire ; and I, for my part (then the bishop put off his cap), again with all my heart exhort you."

A long and wearisome discussion ensued, at the close of which the bishop said, " We trust God will work with you against to-morrow."

On the third day, the bishop, amongst other things, said, " I desire to know whether you persevere still the more in the state that you were?"

Latimer answered :—

"Your lordship often doth repeat the Catholic Church, as though I should deny the same. No, my lord, I confess there is a Catholic Church, to the determination of which I will stand; but not the church which you call Catholic, which sooner might be termed diabolic. And, whereas, you join together the Romish and Catholic Church, stay there, I pray you. For it is one thing to say Romish Church, and another thing to say Catholic Church. I must use here, in this mine answer, the counsel of Cyprian, who at what time he was cited before certain bishops that gave him leave to take deliberation and counsel, to try and examine his opinion, he answered them thus: 'In sticking and persevering in the truth, there must no counsel nor deliberation be taken, and again demanding of them sitting in judgment, which was most like to be of the Church of Christ, whether he who was persecuted or they that did persecute? Christ,' said he, 'hath foreshadowed that; he that doth follow Him must take up his cross and follow Him. Christ gave knowledge that the disciples should have persecution and trouble.' How think you, then, my lords, is it like that the See of Rome, which hath been a continual persecutor, is rather the Church, or that small flock, which hath continually been persecuted of it, even to death? Also the flock of Christ hath been few, in comparison to the residue, and ever in subjection."

The venerable martyr went through a long scriptural argument to prove this statement, and then separated himself from the Church of Rome ; and at

the same time from the Church by law established; to identify himself with the church, however small, persecuted and feeble, consisting of a company of sincere Christian believers.

Testimonies, alike distinct and affecting, were repeated in succession by the noble confessors who were brought up for examination before Bonner, Gardiner, and the rest of the ecclesiastical judges. Their answers were repeated in the circles of their Christian brotherhood, and cherished in their most sacred recollections.

Still more impressive and strengthening to the faith of the persecuted flock was the conduct of the martyrs as they were led from prison to the stake.

On Monday morning, February 4th, 1555, JOHN ROGERS was called to lead the way in the gory path of martyrdom. As he went toward Smithfield, he repeated the 51st Psalm; the *people giving thanks to God for his constancy.* Scenes of martyrdom, 1555.

His wife and ten children by her side, with one at her breast, met him by the way, to take the last look of each other, and were marvellously sustained. At the stake, he showed great patience and fortitude. A few words he uttered to the people, and as the flames curled around him, he committed himself to the Redeemer in the words of Stephen, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit." During the year and a half that he was imprisoned, he wrote much; but the authorities could discover no traces of his manuscripts. His widow and son, Daniel, on returning from Smithfield, were readily admitted into the cell he had occupied, who looked into every corner, as they thought, and were coming

away, supposing others had been beforehand with them, when Daniel spied something black in a dark corner, under a pair of stairs, which proved to be the notes of his examinations and other writings.

On the 8th of February, 1555, BRADFORD wrote to Cranmer, Ridley, and Latimer: "I had thought that every of your staves had stood next the door; but now it is otherwise perceived. Our dear brother Rogers hath broken the ice valiantly, and as this day, I think, or to-morrow at the uttermost, hearty Hooper, sincere Saunders, and trusty Taylor, end their course and receive their crown. The next am I, which hourly look for the porter to open me the gates after them to enter into the desired rest."

"Sincere SAUNDERS," with whom Bradford often conferred behind the walls of the Marshalsea prison, was rector of All Hallows in Bread Street. After being in prison a year and three months, he wrote an answer to the charge of *separation from the Church* to the Bishop of Winchester, in these terms: "Weighing in conscience the Romish religion, and by a candid discussion thereof, finding the foundation unsteadfast, and the building upon it vain; and on the other hand, having my conscience framed upon a right and uncorrupt religion, ratified and fully established by the Word of God, I neither may, nor do intend to be pulled one jot from the same. No, though an angel out of heaven should preach another gospel than that I have received of the Lord, and though I have neither that deep knowledge nor profound judgment, nor that eloquence to utter what I know and judge, as may be required

in an excellent clerk, in order sufficiently to answer and convince the gainsayer, yet do I bind myself as in my humble sincerity to wrap up my belief in the credit of the same; that no authority of that Romish religion repugnant thereunto, shall by any means remove me from the same." The Bishop of London came to degrade Saunders, upon which he said, "I thank God I am none of your church." The next morning the Sheriff of London sent him with a detachment of the queen's guard, to be burned at Coventry. They travelled no further than St. Albans the first night. At Coventry he was put into the gaol amongst the common prisoners, where he slept very little, spending the night in prayer, and in instructing others. He said to a friend there, "Pray for me, for I am the most unfit for this high office of any one that was ever appointed to it; but my gracious God and dear Father is able to make me strong enough." He was martyred on the 8th of February, 1555. When he came to the place of execution he fell to the ground, and prayed; and then arose, and took the stake in his arms, to which he was to be chained, and kissed it, saying, "Welcome the cross of Christ; welcome everlasting life."

The martyrdom of HOOPER called forth strong popular feeling. About four o'clock in the morning on which he was summoned for martyrdom, before daylight, the keepers with others came and searched him and the bed whereon he lay, to see if he had written anything, and then he was led by the sheriffs of London from Newgate to a place not far from St. Dunstan's Church, in Fleet Street, where six of

the queen's guards were appointed to receive him, and to convey him to Gloucester.

On reaching that city so much sympathy was excited, that the mayor and sheriffs commanded the people to keep within their houses lest he should be rescued. When he reached the place of execution, February 9th, 1555, seven thousand people were waiting to "see his behaviour towards his death." He was not suffered to speak to the multitude, but his prayer was reported and eagerly read throughout the country.

The people at the close of his personal supplications, united with him in tears, saying the Lord's Prayer, and stood by as he passed nearly an hour of agony borne with saintly meekness, and closed with the peacefulness of an infant's slumber.

At the martyrdom of ROWLAND TAYLOR the people manifested the same irrepressible sympathy. "The Sheriff of London with his officers came to the compter by two o'clock in the morning, and brought forth Dr. Taylor, and without any light led him to the Woolsack and Tun—an inn without Aldgate. Dr. Taylor's wife suspecting that her husband that night should be carried away, watched all night within St. Botolph's Church beside Aldgate, having with her two children, the one named Elizabeth, of fourteen years of age, who being left without father or mother, Dr. Taylor had brought up of alms from three years old, the other named Mary, Dr. Taylor's own daughter. Now when the Sheriff and his company came over against St. Botolph's Church, Elizabeth cried, saying, "O my dear father; mother, mother, here is my father led away." Then cried

his wife, "Rowland, Rowland, where art thou?" for it was a very dark morning, that the one could not see the other. Dr. Taylor answered, "Dear wife, I am here," and stayed. The sheriff's men would have led him forth, but the sheriff said, "Stay a little, masters, I pray you, and let him speak to his wife;" so they stayed. Then came she to him, and he took his daughter Mary in his arms; and he, his wife, and Elizabeth kneeled down, and said the Lord's Prayer. At which sight the sheriff wept apace, and so did divers of the company. After they had prayed, he rose up and kissed his wife, and shook her by the hand, and said, "Farewell, my dear wife, be of good comfort, for I am quiet in my conscience. God shall stir up a father for my children." And then he kissed his daughter Mary, and said, "God bless thee and make thee his servant;" and kissing Elizabeth, he said, "God bless thee. I pray you all stand steadfast unto Christ and his Word, and keep ye from idolatry." Then said his wife, "God be with thee, dear Rowland; I will, with God's grace, meet thee at Hadley."

The streets of Hadley on the arrival of the martyr with the sheriff and his cavalcade were beset on both sides the way with men and women of the town and country. When they beheld him so led to death, with weeping eyes, they cried, "Ah, there goeth our good shepherd from us, who so faithfully hath taught us, so faithfully hath cared for us, and so godly hath governed us. O merciful God! what shall become of this wicked world? Strengthen and comfort him." At length they reached Aldham Common, the place at which he was to suffer. A

vast concourse had assembled, when Dr. Taylor alighted from his horse, and threw off his hood and cap, and the people could see "his reverent and ancient face," with a long white beard, they burst out with weeping tears, and cried, saying, "God save thee, good Dr. Taylor; Jesus Christ strengthen and help thee—the Holy Ghost comfort thee." "Good people," said the martyr, with a loud voice, "I have taught you nothing but God's holy Word, and those lessons that I have taken out of God's blessed book the Holy Bible, and I am come hither to seal it with my blood."

As these affecting scenes recurred, Bradford with extraordinary diligence wrote the most thrilling and instructive letters to sustain the Christian
Bradford's letters. brethren in bonds, and the devoted people who sympathized with them without. "Fight like men, and valiant men," he said, "under Christ's standard. Take up your cross and follow your Master, as your brethren M. Hooper, Rogers, Taylor, and Saunders have done; and as now your brethren, Cranmer, Latimer, Ridley, Ferrar, Bradford, Hawkes, etc., be ready to do.

"The ice is broken before you; therefore be not afraid, but be content to die for the Lord. You have no cause to waver or doubt of the doctrine thus declared by the blood of the pastors."

When Bradford himself was called to suffer, an immense concourse collected to witness the event. "The time they carried him to Newgate was about eleven or twelve o'clock in the night, when it was thought none would be stirring abroad; and yet, contrary to their expectation in that behalf, was

there in Cheapside and other places between the Compter and Newgate, a great multitude of people that came to see him, which most gently bade him farewell, praying for him with most lamentable and pitiable tears; and he again as gently bade them farewell, praying most heartily for them and their welfare."

Every corner of Smithfield was filled with people at four o'clock of the morning on which he suffered. So that the sheriff said to Bradford, when prostrate on the ground in prayer, with John Leaf, an apprentice who suffered with him, "Arise, and make an end, for the press of the people is so great."

So it was everywhere. The popular sympathy with the martyrs greatly disturbed the authorities. Cardinal Pole issued an address to the citizens of London, in which he complains :
"But wherefore cometh this, then, that when any heretic shall go to execution, he shall lack no comforting of you, and encouragement to die in his perverse opinions, given by those that come out of your house, when he shall be put in prison, he shall have more cherishing; what sign is this?"*

Popular
sympathy
with the
martyrs.

During the whole of this fearful period there were not wanting many who made it their special mission to travel about the country for the purpose of visiting the professors of the gospel and comforting and exhorting them to steadfastness in the faith. "Among these were Lawrence of Barne Hall, and John Barry, his servant; William Pulleyn, afterwards known as Smith; and William, a Scot, who

* *Strype Eccl. vol. vii., 355.*

dwelt at Dedham Heath. *These also regularly ministered to a congregation at the King's*
Head, Colchester, which constantly assembled
 Congrega-
 tion at
 Colchester. during the whole period of the persecution, as a candle upon a candlestick gave light to all those who for the comfort of their consciences came to confer there from divers parts of the realm."*

On the 20th of August, 1556, twenty-three men and women were brought to London from Colchester, tied in a string with ropes, to furnish another holocaust; a thousand people cheered them through the streets as they entered the city.

Bonner, in a letter to Pole, says: "They would come no way but through Cheapside, so that they were brought to my house with about a thousand persons, which thing I took very strange. And I spake to Sir John Granam, then being with me, to tell the mayor and the sheriffs that this thing was not well suffered in the city. These naughty heretics all the way they came through Cheapside, both exhorted the people to their party, and had much comfort from the promiscuous multitude."

Tye, who at the beginning of the reign, professed himself a gospeller, wrote to Bonner, August 18th, 1557: "Since the coming down of
 1557. the twenty-two rank heretics dismissed from you, the detestable sort of schismatics were never so bold since the king and queen's proclamation, as they are now at this present. They
 Private meetings of Christians. assemble together upon the Sabbath day, in the time of divine service, sometimes in one house, sometimes in another, and there keep their

* Strype Mem. iii., ii. c. 285,

private conventicles." He encloses in this letter an account of a two months' tour, which he had just completed in other parts of the country.

Edward Underhill says : " Some were preserved still in London, that in all the time of persecution never bowed their knees unto Baal, notwithstanding their great spiall and search. Shortly after began the cruel persecution of the preachers and earnest professors and followers of the gospel; searching of men's houses for their books. Wherefore I got old Henry Daunce, the bricklayer of Whitechapel, who used to preach the gospel in his garden every holiday, where I have seen a thousand people. We did enclose my books in a brick wall by the chimney side in my chamber, where they were first preserved from molding or mice until the first year of our most gracious Queen Elizabeth, notwithstanding that I removed from thence, and went into Coventry, and got me a house a mile out of the city, in a wood side."

On the 27th of June, 1556, twenty thousand persons attended the burning of thirteen martyrs at Bow, whose ends generally, we are told, in coming there and to such like executions, were to strengthen themselves in the profession of the gospel, and to exhort and comfort those that were to die.

The congregation in London changed its place of meeting from the city to the suburbs, and sometimes assembled in ships upon the river. To avoid detection they met in the night at the house of some brother on the banks of the Thames, and on one occasion, when surprised by the officers, made their escape only by swimming to a boat. A close at St.

John's Wood, Islington, appears to have been their favourite retreat.

This congregation had several ministers—Scambler, Fowler, Rough, Bernhere, and Bentham. JOHN

Congregation at Islington. ROUGH was their pastor, and Cuthbert Sympson deacon. Of Rough we learn that,

September 17th, 1557, he attended the burning of four martyrs to learn the way. On the morning of December 12th, 1557, as forty of them, men and women, sat together "at prayer" and in "the meditation of God's Word, a stranger came among them, and after a short deception, partly intended to gain time, he was followed by King, the constable of the village, with six or seven more—one with a bow, another with a bill, and the rest with weapons."

As many more were at a short distance in ambush to render assistance if required. Some of the women, nevertheless, escaped in the field or on the way. Twenty-seven were captured, and of this number twenty-two were sent to Newgate. After an imprisonment of seven weeks, a message was brought to them by the keeper, offering immediate liberation if they would hear a mass. This overture was declined. "Thirteen of them were burnt, seven in Smithfield and six at Brentford; two died in prison, and the other seven, with much trouble, through God's providence, escaped death." Rough was burnt at Smithfield on the 22nd of December. He was succeeded in the pastoral care by Augustus Bernhere, a faithful servant of Latimer.

CUTHBERT SYMPSON was the first to suffer in 1558, with two members of the congregation, Hugh

Fox and John Devenish. At the trial of ROGER HOLLAND, one of this Christian society, we find a more distinct confession of the principles of the primitive church than in the more learned of his brethren. In his reply to Chedsey, the Romish inquisitor, he said :—

Roger
Holland.

“Mr. Doctor, now to your antiquity, unity, and universality, I am unlearned. I have no sophistry to shift my reason withal : but the truth, I trust, I have which needeth no painted colours to set her forth. The antiquity of our Church is not from Pope Nicolas, or Pope John, but *our Church is from the beginning*, even from the time that God said unto Adam that the seed of the woman should break the serpent’s head. And so to faithful Noah and all the holy fathers that were from the beginning ;—all they that believed these promises were of the Church. Though the numbers were oftentimes but few and small, as in Elias’s days, when he thought there was none but he that had not bowed their knees to Baal, when God had observed seven thousand that never had bowed their knees to that idol ; as I trust there be seven thousand more that have not bowed their knees to the idol, your mass and your god, Maozim. By your cruelty we are forced in the fields to pray unto God that his holy Word may be once again truly preached amongst us, and that He would mitigate these idolatrous days and shorten the reign of cruelty. Our Church hath been the apostles and evangelists, the martyrs and confessors of Christ, that have at all times and in all ages been persecuted for the testimony of the Word of God. For the upholding of your Church and religion, what antiquity can you show ? Yea, the mass, that idol and chief pillar of your religion, is not four hundred years old.”

Bentham writing to his friend Lever, says :—

“The grace and favour of Almighty God be with you and your godly congregation. Amen. My duty binding me to remember my dear friends and our great dangers, move me to desire their help, enforce me at the present both to write unto you, and desire your most godly and effectuous prayers, dear brother and living friend, M. Lever.

Bentham’s
letter to
Lever.

“For now I stand in the gap, whereas you have so earnestly talked with me, now therefore help me with your prayers, and I shall think that you stand present at my back on my right hand.

“Whiles I was in Germany, at liberty of body, having sufficient for it for the time, I was yet many times in great grief of new and terrible torments of hell, and now here being every moment of an hour in danger of taking and fear of bodily death, I am in mind, the Lord be praised, most quiet and joyful, *seeing the fervent zeal of so many and such increase of our congregation*. In the midst of this cruel and violent persecution, what should I say but a *Dominum factum est*. There were seven men burned in Smithfield the 28th of July, altogether, a fearful and cruel proclamation being made, that, under pain of present death, no man should either approach nigh unto them, touch them, neither speak unto them nor comfort them; yet were they so mightily spoken unto, so comfortably taken by the hands, so godly comforted, notwithstanding that fearful proclamation and the present threatenings of the sheriff and serjeants that the adversaries themselves were astonished; and since that time the Bishop of London, either for fear or craft, carried seven men, or six at the least, of his Coal House to Fulham, the 12th day of this month, and condemning them there the 13th day, at one of the clock at afternoon, caused them to be carried the same time to Brentford beside Sion, where they were burned in post haste the same night. This fact purchaseth him more hatred than any he hath done of the common multitude.

“This, I signify, that you, knowing our great danger, may the rather move your godly company to pray for us. I pray you commend me to all your company by name most heartily in our Lord Jesus Christ, who bless and keep you to the comfort of his congregation. Written at London the 17th of July, by yours to his power,

THOMAS BENTHAM.

“Salute all my friends at Zurich by name, I pray.”

At the burning of the seven martyrs in Smithfield, mentioned in this letter, Bentham himself was present, and could well testify what he wrote. As soon as he saw fire put to them, he cried aloud to the people, “Ye know they are the people of God,

and therefore we cannot choose, but wish well to them;" and added, "God Almighty, for Christ's sake, strengthen them;" and he was presently answered by multitudes, "Amen! amen!" to the amazement of the officers.

The Christian people so instructed by the martyrs, and confirmed in faith by their letters and noble example, did not shrink from the dangers before them, or retire from the conflict. Their convictions of the truth became deeper and more distinctly defined; they felt that the gospel was committed to them as a trust for their country and for the world. With quenchless zeal, men like George Eagles (or MOUNTAIN) traversed the different counties of England, content with ^{Mountain.} the humblest fare and the poorest shelter, so that they might make known the truth as it is in Jesus, and strengthen the hearts of those who had already embraced the truth and enjoyed its fellowship.

"When their ministers were either slain or had fled to the continent, they still continued to meet. The flocks, left destitute of their faithful pastors, some of the laity, tradesmen or others, endued with parts and some learning, used in that distress to read the Scriptures to the rest in their meetings, and the letters of the martyrs and prisoners, and other good books; also to pray with them, and exhort them to stand fast, and to comfort and establish them in the confession of Christ to the death. Such an one was that excellent pious man and confessor, JOHN CARELESS, who was a weaver of Coventry, and Clement, a wheelwright.

"Their meetings were at several places, as it was

appointed by themselves, for they often changed their places for more privacy and security. Sometimes it was at Blackfriars, at Sir Thomas Carden's house, who was of the privy-chamber of King Henry VIII.; again, sometimes the meeting was about Aldgate; sometimes in a clothworker's loft, near the great conduit in Cheapside; once or twice in a ship at Billingsgate, belonging to a good man of Lee, in Essex; other times at a ship called Jesus' ship, lying between Ratcliff and Rotherhithe; there twice or thrice till it came to be known; other times in a cooper's house in Pudding Lane; sometimes in Thames Street; sometimes in Bow Churchyard, in Islington, or in the fields thereabouts. These meetings were often in the night-time. There would be in these assemblies forty, and sometimes a hundred or more together; and toward the latter end of the queen the number increased, though the malice of their enemies decreased not. At these meetings they had collections for Christ's prisoners, and would gather sometimes ten pounds at a night meeting."*

The apologists of the Papal system strongly insist that it was the full intention of the Church of Rome to carry out plans of necessary reform, when Luther and his party caused the commotion and disorder that prevented the judicious and wholesome regulation, that would have corrected abuses without causing general convulsion. In the reign of Queen Mary, the Romish prelates had a fair opportunity to show what kind of reformation they were willing to promote.

* Strype, *Mary 1*, chap. 64, 470. 1558.

It would be extremely difficult to find evidence of any reforming tendencies in those who had the direction of ecclesiastical affairs at this period; but on examination of the injunctions issued by Bonner and other bishops in the reign of Henry VIII., we find that they had some desire ^{Bonnerian reformation.} to repress some of the more glaring abuses, and to this extent it is proper we should give them due credit. They were equally anxious, no doubt, in the Marian time, to preserve some appearance of external decency.

The Romish prelates required that more attention should be given to preaching. The Archbishop of York, for example, directs that "every curate, resident and 'hable,' shall make four solemn sermons in the year, one every quarter; not resident, having £5, or £6 13s. 4d. *de claro*, shall find *one* solemn sermon for the instruction of the people in the beginning of Lent; having £10 *de claro*, *two* solemn sermons, one in the beginning of Lent, another at some other time of the year; having £15, *three* sermons, one in the beginning of Lent, the other at two convenient times; having £20, *four* sermons, one at Lent, the other at three convenient times; having £30 *de claro*, *five* sermons, one at Lent, and the other four at convenient times; having £40, *six* sermons, one in the beginning of Lent, and the other five at convenient times; and as the clear value doth increase, so more sermons."

The Bishop of Salisbury enjoined his clergy to be more careful in the *matter of relics*. ^{Relics.} We owe some apology to the reader for the inelegance of the prelate's description; but

perhaps low as the style of his lordship is, it is not really beneath the subject.

"Holy relics," says the bishop, "as I myself have certain which be already come to my hands have perfect knowledge of, namely, of stinking boots, mucky combs, ragged rochets, rotten girdles, pyled purses, great bullocks' horns, locks of hair, and filthy rags, jobbetts of wood, under the name of parcels of the holy cross, and such pelfrie beyond estimation; over and besides the shameful abuse of such as peradventure be true relics; whereof nevertheless certain proofs none; but only such that so they have been taken, judged, and esteemed, yea, and so called without monuments had of them in any authentic form of writing. *I heartily pray you all and singular my said brethren of the clergy, and command you that you send all such your relics one and another unto me at mine house at Ramesbury, or other, where together with such writings as ye have of the same, to the intent that I and my council may explore and try what they be, and those that be esteemed and judged to be undoubtedly true relics ye shall not fail at convenable time to have again, with certain instructions how they ought to be used; that is to say, as memorials of them whose relics they be, in whom and by whom Almighty God did work all that ever they virtuously wrought: and therefore only He ought in them all to be glorified, lauded, and praised; so that we which rejoiceth may in the Lord rejoice; to whom be all honour and glory for ever and ever. Amen.*"

The proposed reformation with respect to relics there is reason to believe was not wholly spontaneous. The exposures made of the impostures practised by the priests rendered it imperative that some care should be taken. Calvin recommended that a proper inventory should be made. He gives an elaborate description of relics purporting to be the identical object in numerous places. A few passages from his treatise will illustrate its general character:—

"It now remains," he says, "to consider certain articles which

are a kind of accessories of the body, for instance, the *shoe* which is at Paris in the monastery of the Carthusians. It was stolen some twelve or fifteen years ago, but another forthwith made its appearance; and, indeed, so long as shoemakers exist there will be no want of such relics. They give out that in the Church of Joannes Lateranensis, at Rome, they have got his girdle, of which there is no mention of in Scripture. It is only said that he had his raiment of camel's hair. This raiment they choose to convert into a girdle. They say they have also in the same place the altar, in which he said his prayers in the desert, as if at that time it had been the custom to erect altars in every place, and on every occasion. It is strange they do not also make him perform mass. At Avignon they have the sword with which his head was cut off, and at Aqqs, in Germany, the linen cloth which was placed under him in the act of beheading him. How, I would fain know, was there so much kindness and civility in the executioner as to cover the bottom of the dungeon with a carpet at the time he was going to put the Baptist to an ignominious death? I would also like to know how these things happened to come into their hands. Is it probable that the executioner, whether he were a courtier or a common soldier, gave the linen cloth and his sword, that they might be converted into relics? As they wished to make the collection of relics so very perfect, they have blundered sadly in overlooking the knife with which Herodias is said to have wounded him in the eye, and likewise all the blood that must have been spilt, together with his tomb. But perhaps the mistake is in me. It is quite possible that these famous articles are exhibited in places I am not acquainted with."

Calvin closes his pamphlet with the following juvenile reminiscences :—

"I recollect when I was a boy how they were wont to do with the images of our parish. When the feast of Stephen drew near, they adorned them all alike with garlands and necklaces, just decking the murderers who stoned Stephen in the same way as they decked Stephen himself. When the old women saw the murderers thus adorned, they imagined that they were Stephen's companions. Accordingly, every one was presented with his candle. Nay, the same honour was conferred on the devil who

contended with Michael, and so on with the rest. And so completely are they all mixed up and huddled together, that it is impossible to have the bones of any martyr without running the risk of worshipping the bones of some thief or robber, or it may be, the bones of a dog, or a horse, or an ass. Nor can the Virgin Mary's ring, or comb, or girdle, be venerated without the risk of venerating some part of the dress of a strumpet. Let every one, therefore, who is inclined, guard against this risk. Henceforth no man will be able to excuse himself by pretending ignorance."

The bones in the churches of the diocese of Salisbury must have been mixed in strange confusion. On what principle the bishop proceeded to classify them or to vouch for the authenticity of any of them, must remain a mystery.

Bonner appears to have made some effort to secure a better *quality* in the sermons preached once a quarter, or oftener, as the case might be. He enjoins:—

"That all priests shall observe this order when they preach: first, they shall not rehearse sermons made by other men, within this two hundred or three hundred years; but when Bonner's injunctions. they preach, they shall take the gospel, or epistle of the day, which they shall recite and declare to the people plainly, distinctly, and sincerely, from the beginning to the end thereof, and then to desire the people to pray with them for grace."

That there was abundant need for such a petition we may infer from the following "injunctions:"—

"ITEM.—That whereupon a detestable and abominable practice *universally reigning* in your parishes, the young people, and other ill-disposed persons, doth use upon the Sundays and holy-days, in time of divine service, and preaching the Word of God, to resort to ale-houses, and there exerciseth unlawful games, with great swearing, blasphemy, drunkenness, and other enormities, so that good and devout persons be much offended there-

with ; wherefore I require and command you to declare to such as keepeth ale-houses, or taverns, within your parishes, that at such times from henceforth, they shall not suffer in their houses any such unlawful and ungodly assemblies, neither receive such persons to bowling and drinking at such seasons, into their houses, under pain of *excommunication*, and otherwise to be punished for their so doing, according to the laws in that behalf."

"ITEM.—That no priest, from henceforth, do use any unlawful games, or frequently use any ale-house, taverns, or any light company, but only for their necessities, as they and any of them, will avoid the danger that may ensue thereupon."

Bonner enjoins the clergy to observe a decorous and dispassionate *manner in preaching*.

"Furthermore," he says, "that no persons shall rage or rail in his sermon ; but *coldly*, discreetly, and charitably, .open, declare, and set forth the excellency of virtue, and to suppress the abomination of sin and vice."

It is not necessary to add to these examples of the Bonnerian Reformation. In the light, they afford as to the character and spirit of the hierarchy, we may estimate more certainly the priceless value of the testimony given by the earnest and faithful witnesses for Christ, who were willing to labour, to suffer reproach, and even to die, that "the truth in England might continue."

CHAPTER XXI.

IN the course of our historical investigation, we have often had to notice, incidentally, the implied admission of the scripturalness of Congregational principles on the part of the Reformers. It may be useful at this stage of the inquiry to cite some of their more explicit statements on this subject. No candid reader of the New Testament can fail to recognize the simplicity of the constitution of the Christian Church as there described.

However conscientiously opinions may be formed under the influence of party associations, or of speculative theories, it must be manifest to all who understand what they read in the writings of the inspired apostles that the great practical design of the gospel was to implant the principles of internal and vital godliness. "The kingdom of God," said our Lord, "*is within you.*" His entire teaching was to this effect. The externalism of the Jewish system was to give place to a pure and spiritual reign. The same doctrine is taught throughout the epistles. "We are the circumcision," said the Apostle Paul, "which worship God *in the Spirit*, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in

Christian
Church as
described
in the New
Testament.

the flesh." "In Christ Jesus, neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision; but a new creature." It is as clearly taught that this vital godliness with its transforming power, must have a visible and practical manifestation. The true believer must be separated in principle, in spirit and in aim, from the "world that lieth in wickedness." Not, indeed, renouncing social obligations; for Christians are to "shine as lights in the world;" but the declaration is emphatically made, "Ye are *not of the world*," and the call is distinctly given, "Come out from among them, and be ye *separate*."

But the Christian is not left in a state of isolation by this detachment from the world. He has a yearning for real communion, and the new affections called forth by the gospel, prepare him to take his place in the "household of faith." The Christian Church becomes the spiritual home of believers, where all gifts and graces are to be rendered tributary to the edification of its members. We find, therefore, that wherever converts were gained by the preaching of the Word, they were formed into a distinct society called the Church. They managed their own affairs as independently as the members of one family. There is no exception to this in the career of the apostles. Even the miracles performed by them led to a more distinct line of demarcation. "Of the rest durst no man join himself to them;" they "separated the disciples." We cannot wonder, therefore, that theological writers should admit the completeness of the individual church, and the equality of Christian pastors, though, from various reasons, they should identify them.

selves with systems differing so strangely from the primitive model. The testimonies to be found of this nature are so numerous, that the only difficulty is to make the selection required for convenient brevity :—

LUTHER, in his exposition of the article in the creed concerning the “Holy Catholic Church,” says: “*Church, or Ecclesia,* means properly, the *congregation, or communion of Christians.*”*

“He wrote a special treatise to prove “That the Church hath the right and power to judge of any doctrine, also of calling the ministers of the gospel, or, if they shall cease to be faithful, to depose them.”†

MELANCTHON, in the seventh article of the Confession of Augsburg, says: “There is one Holy Church to abide for ever; and the *Church is a congregation of saints.*”‡

In his “*Outlines of Theology,*” he uses the terms Bishops and presbyters as synonymous.

CALVIN in his “*Institutes,*” says: “In giving the name of bishops, presbyters and pastors, indiscriminately, to those who govern churches, I have done it on the authority of the Scripture which uses the words as synonymous.”§

ZWINGLE (in “*Epichrisis de Canone Missæ*”), says: “There is nothing so agreeable to the ordinance of God, and to ancient institution, as that *the whole Church of the faithful* amongst a people, together with certain learned and godly bishops, and other faithful men, having skill in things, should choose a pastor. He that with a council of bishops shall impose on Christian people any law or observance, without their concurrence invades the rights of the churches by a violent command.”||

PETER MARTYR (on Cor. xvi. 15) says: “We confess the keys are given to the whole Church,” verse 3. “It is of no marvel that it is the right of the Church to choose ministers, seeing the civil laws give power to towns to choose their physicians and schoolmasters.”

MUSCULUS (Com. place of Min. Elect.) contends that the

* Catechismus Major Opera, tom. v. p. 628.

† Tom. ii. p. 374.

‡ Conf. August, art. vii., Sylloge, p. 125; also p. 171.

§ Trans. Soc. vol. iii. p. 64.

|| Ad Valentinum Comparum, etc. Gieseler,

election of ministers by the people is the most ancient, the fittest, the divine and apostolical election, and that the other mode has sprung from the corrupt state of the Church of Rome.

BULLINGER (Decad. v. 4. Sermon, Titus i. ; 1 Tim. v.) "The Lord from the beginning gave authority to the Church to choose and ordain ministers."

GUALTER (Homil. in Acts xiii. 2). "The election and ordinations of the ministers of the Word and of the Church, ought not to be made secretly within private walls by a few men, but publicly by the Church and in the face of the whole Church."

CRANMER, in his "Questions and Answers concerning the Sacraments," says: "Bishops and priests (presbyters) were not two things, but both one office in the beginning of Christ's religion."*

VIRET. "The Church in respect of the government which Jesus Christ instituted, is a holy and free commonalty, which for the same cause is called a community of saints, to which generally (and not to any person in particular), Jesus Christ gave the whole power and authority to edification and not to destruction."†

BUCER in Matt. xvi. 19. "This power and sway of the government is in the whole Church." "The apostle," he tells us (De Regno Christi i. 9) "blamed the Christians because the whole Church did not exclude the incestuous person."

BEZA, in his eighty-third epistle, contends that nothing should be obtruded on the Church or imposed against the will of the people.

The question naturally arises, if these eminent theologians entertained and expressed such scriptural views, why did they not adhere to them practically in the ecclesiastical constitutions framed under their influence or personal direction? The reason of their inconsistency is obvious, when we consider the kind of reformation they sought, and the conditions under which they attempted to effect the desired change. A national or provincial church

* Miscellaneous Writings, etc., p. 117.

† "Exposition Familiere des Principaux Poincts du Catechism," etc. Dialog. 20 and 21. Œuvres de Viret, tom. i. pp. 86, seq.

can never be based simply on the principles laid down in the New Testament. A supplementary act of human legislation is invariably required.

The fellowship of the Church, as described in the inspired epistles, is that of saints. "Ye are also the called of Jesus Christ, beloved of God, called to be saints," Rom. i. 6, 7. "The Church of God, which is at Corinth, sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints." 1 Cor. i. 2. "God is faithful, by whom ye were called unto the fellowship of his Son Jesus Christ." 1 Cor. i. 9. "Walk worthy of God, who hath called you unto his kingdom and glory. For this cause also thank we God without ceasing, because, when ye received the Word of God which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the Word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe." 1 Thess. ii. 12, 13.

It has never been pretended that the constituents of a national church sustain a character corresponding with these descriptions given by the apostle. No writer of the sixteenth century stated the case more frankly than did Archbishop WHITGIFT.

"I do not deny," he says, "but in the apostles' time, and after, even to Cyprian's time, the people's consent was in many places required in the appointing of ministers; but I say that in the whole Scripture, there is no commandment that it should be so; nor any example that maketh therein any necessary rule, but that it may be altered as time and occasion serveth. For in such matters not commanded or prohibited in Scripture touching ceremonies, discipline, and government, the Church hath authority from time to time to appoint that which is most convenient for the present state; and I add, that howsoever in the apostles' time, that kind of electing and calling ministers was convenient and profitable; now, in this state of the church it were

Whitgift's
reason for
the abandon-
ment of
the apos-
tolic model.

most pernicious and hurtful. First, because in the apostles' time the Church was under the cross, and therefore very few in comparison was there that embraced the gospel, and commonly they kept together, or at the least met oftentimes, so the one of them was thoroughly known to all other, and they themselves could best judge who among them was the fittest to teach and instruct, having always divers fit for that function. Now the Church is in prosperity, and therefore the number that professeth, great, and dispersed unto divers places, and in most parishes, not one fit for the ministry among them or known unto them, so that they should call they know not whom. Secondly, in the apostles' time, all or the most that were Christians were virtuous and godly, and such as sincerely did profess the Word, and therefore the election of their pastor might be safely committed to them. Now, the Church is full of hypocrites, dissemblers, drunkards, whoremongers, so that if any election were committed to them, they would be sure to take one like to themselves. Thirdly, in the apostles' time, all that professed Christ had knowledge, and were able to judge who were meet to be their pastor. Now the most be ignorant and without judgment in such matters. Fourthly, in the apostles' time there were in the Church no idolaters, no superstitious persons, no Papists; now the Church is full of Papists, Atheists, and such like. Who seeth not, therefore, what strange ministers we should have if the election of them were committed to these several parishes. Fifthly, in the apostles' time there was no church established, being then no Christian magistrates, and therefore the state of the churches was popular; now there are Christian magistrates and a church established subject to rulers, etc.

"Therefore the diversity of the Church requireth a divers kind of judgment, and another kind of ordaining ministers."*

In this logical conclusion of the Archbishop lies the whole philosophy of the matter.

The Protestant churches in Germany were formed by conventions of princes, divines, and jurisconsults met to settle the faith and form of worship to be adopted by the general community. The result was not unfrequently determined after some sanguinary battle. In Switzerland the several cantons decreed

* Answer to Cartwright's Admonition to Parliament, p. 42, seq.

the form of the Church to be publicly recognized, and the worship to be adopted according to the numerical majority. In the course of Farel's ministrations the vote was obtained in the midst of a fearful riot, and when the conflicting parties were equally balanced it sometimes happened that they were required to share the use of the churches and to keep the peace toward each other until one side gained the preponderance; but on no account were conscientious and humble Christian people to be suffered to meet together for worship or Christian fellowship, for that would be the act of a sect holding conventicle—a crime to be punished with imprisonment or death. Of necessity the Reformers who were connected with churches so organized, notwithstanding their statements respecting the examples and precepts of the New Testament, had to modify their views and to offer some formal justification of the compromise. Practically the German Reformers aimed at nothing beyond obtaining congregations in which the gospel was preached and the sacraments so administered that *the existence of a church might be inferred*. They never made the attempt to form a church on the model of the New Testament.

Manner of forming churches in Germany and Switzerland.

Churches by inference.

In his "Apology," which he published for the Augsburg Confession, Melancthon says:—

"For the 14th Article, in which we say that we allow no one to preach the Word and minister the sacraments who is not lawfully called, they (the Papists) allow of it in this manner: if we but use a canonical ordination. We have often declared concerning this matter, that we are very desirous to preserve the ecclesiastical polity and

Flexible principles of Melancthon.

the degrees *that are in the Church, even those ordained by human authority.* For we know that the ecclesiastical discipline, as it is described by the Fathers had a good and useful design. But the bishops either force our priests to reject and condemn the doctrine which we have now confessed, or else with a new and unheard of cruelty, they murder the miserable and innocent. *These are the causes that hinder our priests from owning these bishops.* So that the cruelty of the bishops is *the cause, that in some places that canonical polity is dissolved, which we very much desired to preserve."*

Melancthon regarded the connexion of the State with the Church as similar to that which exists between the body and the soul. He dwells incessantly on what he calls the "corporale regimen," and the "spirituale regimen."† The vocation of the State, according to the view of Melancthon, consists in punishing crime when perpetrated, and in averting it when threatened. The Church, on the contrary, has an inward spiritual vocation, which is entirely different from the external. The State, he tells us, is bound to give its help to the Church. In his treatise entitled, "A Confutation of the Anabaptist Article," he calls the State the "servant of the Church, which must lend its arm to punish trespassers in an entirely different sphere."‡ He declares capital punishment to be due to all who renounce infant baptism, original sin, and unnecessary separation from the true Church. Gradually Melancthon passed from the theocratic view of the Church to the *Territorial Principle*. He recognizes the magistrate as a member and representative of the Church.§ If

Melancthon's views of Church and State.*

The Territorial Principle.

* Wesen des Protestantismus; Schenkel, p. 394, seq.

† Corp. Reform, i. 595.

‡ iii. 30.

§ iii. 244.

the magistracy were only "body," not also "soul," it would stand without, not within the Church. It could not in that case possibly come to the determination where pure doctrine was, or where it was not. Particularly towards the year 1540, Melancthon began to concede to the magistracy the former episcopal power, not simply to serve the Church but to rule it.* This theory was first distinctly broached at Smalkald. Magistrates were now recognized as the principal members of the Church by virtue, not of their principles or personal character, but of their office. Magistracy has the right, he says, to try which are the true doctrines, only it shall not make use of the right with partiality, but in conjunction with pious and well advised Christians. The princes shall not scrutinize ecclesiastical affairs partially, without consultation with the clergy and possibly hearing expert laymen, in return for which the supreme management of ecclesiastical affairs is committed to them as the sole executive power, Protestantism would be lost in Melancthon's opinion, without the help of princes. Priests might no longer punish heresies with death, but only princes and magistrates, and it consoled Melancthon to think, that under this arrangement if the heretic should be put to death, "the blow falls not on the belief but the heresy."† He did not foresee the consequences of these territorial principles. If the temporal power is to decide from a political aspect, whether a doctrine is to be tolerated or not, what is to become of that evangelical doctrine whose propagation in a political point of view may

* ii. 712; iii. 228.

† iii. 1250; iv. 568; v. 129; vii. 205; x. 800; viii. 523, 852; xii. 697.

occasion so much trouble, if not danger to the State? Inevitably, *cujus regis, ejus religio*, and a prince must be entitled to abolish a creed which may not be favourable to his political plans, and to establish one which would further them. Under the influence of this territorial system the Church withered in all its spiritual interests. Paralysis in scientific activity; relaxation in the zeal of faith; indifference to convictions; eye-service and men-pleasing in those things which pertain to the sanctuary of conscience and heart; a decrease of sympathy on the part of the members of the Church with the development of Christian life; mixing of the spiritual and ecclesiastical province with that of the temporal; and the State secularizing the Church without the corresponding spiritualizing of the State;—these were the necessary consequences which followed, and were developed by the exclusive State Church system even when most consistent.

BULLINGER, who became the great expounder of the theory, tells us that Nimrod, Genesis x. 9, was called a mighty hunter before the Lord, ^{Bullinger's theory.} that in Judges champions are raised by the Lord; these supply proofs that the magistracy must exercise absolute sovereignty over the Church. In history it soon happened that the evangelical creed was no longer desired and appropriated by the people with joyful conviction, but was commanded and established by the lords for political ends. The Wittenberg consistory charged itself with ^{Wittenberg Consistory.} providing that all ministers of the gospel preach and teach conformably to the Divine Word, unanimously and uniformly, that the pure teachings

be carried to the people, that factious sects, suspicious books and teachings be kept far off; that uniformity be observed in ceremonies, psalmody, priestly vestments, and administration of the sacraments; and that the attendance of the people on divine worship, and the due observance of the sacraments be enforced in case of necessity by temporal penalties. In 1552 the Lutheran Church in the Mecklenburg Agenda expressed the wish that all men from youth upward might express the whole Christian doctrine in the same words and syllables.”*

Mecklen-
burg
Agenda.

The Mansfield “Agenda,” 1554, rejoices that excommunication is given entirely into temporal hands, and is turned into a civil punishment. The “civil censure,” a kind of trial in the council-house on the sects, removed the last remnant of spiritual discipline, and the “bailiffs” and “servants of the State” have now to search out spiritual errors, only they must not be wanting in “their diligence and work,” lest a portion of the penalty and punishment fall on them.

Mansfield
Agenda.

In the “Saxon General Articles,” in 1557, the Electoral Graces will that young persons must learn to repeat the Lutheran catechism *word for word*, and whoever neglects the service of God without substantial excuse must be fined, or if he has no money must be pilloried.† The Church throughout became only a special department of the State.

Saxon
General
Articles.

Calvin aimed to secure for Church and State

* Richter, ii, 122; Schenkel, p. 417.

† Bgl. die Württemberger, K. D. (1553), pp. 132, 143; Schenkel, p. 418.

united accommodation. He would preserve the specific independence of both. The State must not take upon itself the affairs of the Church, nor the Church those of the State.

Calvin's
theocratic
state.

The State wields the sword, the Church the Word, and yet both work in and for one another. The Church preaches and educates, and by this the State keeps good citizens. The State corrects and punishes, and by this the Church dispenses with the office of chastiser, which is opposed to its nature.* This was the theory of Calvin, but practically it could not be carried out. Calvin denied that the State is at all entitled to rule the Church, and to interfere in its peculiar affairs; on the contrary, he demands that the State shall serve the Church as the body is obliged to serve the soul. In this sense the State has to exercise above all the duty of protection over the true Church, with which is associated the duty of prohibiting all false worship. The magistrate for this purpose has only to wield the sword, it does not become him to have either judgment or power in spiritual things, but his sword should be wielded pre-eminently for the divine glory. Hence follows the special duty of the magistrates to subdue or neutralize all those elements which disturb and resist the true Church. In his letter to Servetus, he says, "Let it be well understood that the State assumes no duty which is not incumbent upon it, but it accepts only a liability to service, and therefore has the first claim to the protection of the laws.† Even with the Pagan philosophers he passed for a

* Inst. iv. 11, 8; Inst. iv. 20, 1, 8; Cono. iii. in cap. i. Jobi.

† Loci Comm. p. 1114 (Epist. ad Dominos Polonos Evang. Prof.)

bad legislator, who did not look after the support and claims of religion before all others.

If a Nebuchadnezzar, although a fierce tyrant, took care of religion, what must we think of Christian rulers who are indifferent to it? Calvin in this way placed Christian doctrine under the protection of the secular power, and claimed for the Church that the sword of the magistrate should be wielded against error. He did not desire all at once, that the penalty of death should be inflicted against those who departed from the faith. He would have a distinction to be made in the several gradations of dogmatical error, and use in the first instance the gentler methods of Christian instruction and persuasion. He would punish heresy and the denial of the fundamental truths of Christianity with death, but in this terrible mission of the sword he found a serious practical difficulty. How would it be possible to reproach the Papacy, if the Reformation should drag all those who went astray from its fundamental articles to the scaffold and the stake? The Protestants, in that case, must burn all the adherents of the Papacy. Calvin felt instinctively that this would be going too far. He therefore limits the application of his punitive theory to those who were in relation to his own communion, and apostates in the proper sense of the word. Jews, Turks, and Papists may be allowed to live in their faith; but Protestant Christians who avow fundamental errors must be exterminated at the edge of the sword. On this principle he justified the death of Servetus. Calvin had no desire for a State Church, but that the Church should help the State.

If the stability of the Church is threatened, thrown into confusion by false teachers, vexed by dangers without and within ; if the spiritual means no longer suffice for its defence and self-preservation, then the State is in duty bound to come to the help of the Church with its temporal means, to suppress the disturbing and imperilling powers and elements, if necessary with force, be it even with fire and sword.

In the advice given by Calvin to the Reformers in other countries than his own, we see the same want of certainty in his principles in relation to Church polity as that exhibited ^{Calvin's variations.} in the correspondence of Luther and Melancthon. In his Institutes he expresses himself so as to leave the churches at liberty in respect to the episcopate. Writing to the Duke of Somerset, he speaks of the office of "bishops and curates." In a letter to Sigismund II., King of Poland, he himself proposes, in case Poland should break off, as he hopes it will, from the Romish Church, the establishment of a Polish episcopate. Why will he have nothing similar in France? Probably, in the first place, because the equality of the pastors seems to him more certainly evangelical and primitive. In the next place, doubtless, because the episcopate would always be in danger of bringing back a part, at least, of the Romish abuse, in relation to that head. He accepts it in England, but it is because it is already there ; and he advises it in Poland, only because he does not think he can do otherwise. In France, where he is not compelled to admit it, he will not admit it.*

* Bungenier, *Life of Calvin*, p. 212.

CHAPTER XXII.

BEFORE we proceed to the continuation of the general narrative, we must notice briefly the development of the principles of religious liberty at the Reformation, more particularly in reference to the right of voluntary association for Christian worship. The agitation of Luther, directed against the Papal yoke, made the down-trodden subjects of the princes conscious of their serfdom. Emerging from the ignorance and superstition of the Romish Church, and very imperfectly instructed in the truths of the gospel, they began to think that some recognition should be made of their personal rights, as well as of their individual obligations. They presented their demands in a series of formal articles. In the first article they say :—"It is our humble desire, and also our will and resolution, that for the future we should have power and authority ; our whole community should choose and appoint our pastor. Also, that we should have power to deprive him if he conduct himself improperly. The pastor thus chosen must preach to us the holy gospel pure and plain, without addition or ordinance of man." They proposed, on certain conditions, to provide for the pastor so chosen and

Religious
liberty at
the time
of the Re-
formation.

Petition
of the
peasants.

appointed, by tithes, a decent and sufficient maintenance. In justification of their insurrectionary movement, they say:—

“Hitherto it has been the custom for men to hold us as their property, which is a pitiable case, considering that Christ has delivered and redeemed us with his precious blood, and shed for us, the peasant as the prince. Accordingly, it is not inconsistent with Scripture that we should be free, and wish to be so. Not that we wish to be absolutely free, and under no authority; but we take it for granted that you will either willingly release us from serfage, true and real Christians, or prove to us from the gospel that we are serfs. If one or more of the articles here set forth is not in agreement with the Word of God, we will recede therefrom if it be made plain to us on scriptural grounds; or if an article be now conceded to us, and hereafter it be discovered to be unjust, from that hour it shall be dead and null, and have no more force. Likewise, if more articles of complaint be truly discovered from Scripture, we will also receive the right of resolving upon them.”*

Unhappily, they soon passed from the stage of verbal protestation to that of physical violence, in imitation of the princes on both sides in the great controversy of the Reformation. Their passions, once excited, it became the more difficult to impose self-restraint. In this universal ferment, fanatics arose asserting that the Church should be pure; but in a spirit truly Satanic; for while they pretended to be themselves immaculate, they committed the most horrible crimes, and sought to exterminate all others as Canaanites who did not adopt their views. The names of their leaders—Munzer, John of Leyden, and Knipperdoling—became justly associated with perpetual infamy. They were called “Anabaptists;” but it is essential, in order to a

* Walch. vol. xvi. p. 24, *seq.*

just view of the facts, to understand that they did not practise the rite of immersion, and that they had nothing in common, either with respect to religious principles or general character, with evangelical Baptists. The epithet "Anabaptist," as significant of disorder, tumult, and violence, was freely applied to all who, from this time, professed a desire for purity of communion, and sought to realize this object in the voluntary association of Christian believers. The truth is, that the Anabaptists, so called, of the Reformation, were of diversified character. Some of them, if we are to credit the charges made against them, rested their pretensions to superiority as Christian Churches exclusively on the mode of administering the ordinance of Baptism. Others were called by the same name, who insisted that there was no necessity for church organization, and denied the doctrine of the resurrection. But there is the clearest and most ample evidence to show that, in contradistinction to these parties, there were sincere and exemplary people, who framed their articles of faith in the simple words of the New Testament, and evinced the most peaceful spirit.

Different
parties
called Ana-
baptists.

To take the testimony of Zwingli, one of their determined opponents, the charge he makes against them is, that they hold that "the government should not and must not interfere with religion and matters of faith. Christians resist no power, accordingly they require no tribunal. A Christian makes use of no court. Christians put no men to death, Their punishment is not with imprisonment

and the sword; but only with exclusion. No one should be compelled to believe by any force or constraint; nor any one put to death for the faith. Christians defend not themselves; so they wage no wars, and do not obey the government in this point.*

Erasmus speaks of them as a "people against whom there is very little to be said, and concerning whom, we are assured, that there are many who have been reformed from the worst to the best lives. Yet they have never stormed towns, nor churches, nor entered into any combinations against the authority of the magistrates, nor driven anybody from his government or state."† The chief cause of offence given by them was, that of meeting together for worship apart from the churches sanctioned by the State. Bullinger, in opposition to them, said, that liberty and unconditional tolerance of belief, would end in universal confusion and division, and it must gradually come to this—

Principal
offence of
the Chris-
tian Bap-
tists.

"That there will be found in every town, yea, in every spot, a dozen different beliefs, indeed, those who would now believe nothing at all would then form a separate sect." He desired, therefore, that "sectaries," and blasphemers should be put to death. Moderation, he is careful to observe, should be used according to the doctrine maintained, and the degree of influence exerted. "A mean in everything," he says, "is best. There are prisons for them to be shut up into, which are corrupted with the poison of false doctrine and lack of belief lest peradventure they infect others with their contagious disease.

Bullinger
on the en-
cency of
putting
them to
death.

* Zwinglii in *Catabaptistarum Stophas Elenchus*, Opp. iii. p. 433; Gieseler, vol. v. p. 355.

† Quoted in Schyr.

There are also other means to punish the body, whereby to keep under that err from the truth, to keep them from marring those that are sound, and to preserve themselves, that they may fall to amendment.

"I cannot here," he adds, "wink and slyly pass over the *objections* that some men make against that which hitherto I have made touching punishment, to wit, that the Apostle Paul hath not commanded to kill or punish a heretic after the first and second admonition, but to avoid him. Again, that faith is the gift of God, which cannot be given, or engrafted in any man by the rigour of the sword; also that no man is to be compelled; he that constraineth may make a hypocrite: but a devout and zealous man he cannot make; and lastly, that the apostles required no aid of kings, either to maintain or set out the religion of Christ, or else to punish blasphemers, railers, and enemies of God's word.

"To all this I answer: Paul, in his Epistle to Titus, did write to an *apostle*. If he had written to Sergius Paulus, or any *lieutenant*, he would, undoubtedly, have taught him his office. Faith is the gift of God; but where He bestoweth faith, he useth means to give it by. Those means He will not have us neglect."*

Bullinger brings out the paternal argument for the enforcement of religion by the sword of the magistrate, without reserve:—

"A good father," he says, "would think much, yea, he would not think well of it, if his son should say, 'Father, I pray you, teach me not; send me not so much to church, and beat me not if I be not there, for faith is the gift of God, which whipping cannot bring me to.' Then what man can quietly abide to hear that faith is the gift of God, and that, therefore, no man ought, for faith, that is, for the corruption of faith and open blasphemy, to suffer any punishment.

"If no man ought to be compelled to goodness, to what intent doth Solomon (the wisest of men) so many times command us to chasten children? 'He that spareth the rod, hateth the child,' said he. 'Thou indeed dost strike him; but with the rod thou deliveredst his soul from death,' Prov. xiii. 24; xvii. 14.

* Second Decade, p. 360, *seq.*

The paternal argument.

"Men in their madness despise compulsion and chastising punishment; but when they come to themselves again, and see how great evils they are delivered from by those that compelled them, they rejoice that to their health they were chastened, and praise the compulsion which before they despised."

The passive sufferers for conscience' sake excited the sympathy of many friends of the Reformation.

"These poor Baptists," writes Catherine Zell, of Strasburg, "whom you are so furious against, hounding on the civil powers against them as a hunter sets his dogs against hares and wild boars, do they not acknowledge the same Christian Lord that we do, and are also at one with us concerning his redemption, which was the main cause of our separation from the Papacy; and yet, because they differ from us in some other matters, they are persecuted on account of these differences, and Christ, whom they stedfastly confess is persecuted in them, for many among them have continued to confess Him in the midst of misery, imprisonment, fire, and water. Are we rather not verily guilty of their separation from us? Has there been nothing in our doctrine and life that has been the cause of it? If any man is an evil-doer, let the magistrate interfere to punish him, but let there be no civil interference to constrain and regulate faith as ye have been doing, for that belongs to the Lord and to the conscience, and to no external power. Read the writings of our ancient teachers, and of those by whom the gospel has anew been proclaimed among us, especially the works of our dear Luther and Brenz, who are still with us, and you will see that therein is constantly maintained and defended, that only in civil cases has the civil power anything to do."

Sympathy
with per-
secuted
Baptists, by
Catherine
Zell.

Luther failed in the application of the principles of religious liberty, but they are distinctly enunciated in several passages of his writings.

"Since faith, then," he said, "is for every man an affair of conscience, the temporal power should not meddle with the

things of faith. It should leave each man free to believe what he can and what he pleases, and use no coercion in matters of conscience. Faith is the work of God in our spirit; how, then, can it come from external pressure? Constraint is powerless to make believers.”*

In his discourse on the parable of the tares, a common topic of discussion at the time, he says :—

“Consider how madly we have gone to work, who would need compel unto the faith. Turks by war, heretics by fire, Jews through fear of death and other injuries, and pull up the tares by our own strength, as if we were a kind of men by ourselves, who had power over the hearts and spirits of men, and as if it were in our hand to bring men unto righteousness and true godliness. By such a course we pull men quite away from the Word by slaying them, that it cannot work anything upon them, and so, as much as in us lieth, we make ourselves guilty of a double death; that of the body, which we destroy by a death temporal, and of the soul, which we thrust down into hell, so slaying it eternally. And then we boast as if we had performed some special service unto God, and promise ourselves a reward in heaven for it. Well, therefore, may this Scripture thoroughly terrify those inquisitors after heretics and those murderers, if they had not a front of brass, who make little or nothing of putting men to death for every error deemed such by themselves, though they had heretics to deal with; but now, being heretics themselves, they burn true saints. What is this but to pluck up the wheat, whilst they pretend the pulling up of the tares?”†

The testimony of BRENZ is the more interesting from his prepossessions against Anabaptist opinions. He had himself acted on “peace principles,” but was

* Martini Lutheri de magistratu seculari, secunda pars in qua aperte ostenditur hæreticorum punitionem ad magistratum non pertinere. Joachimus Cluten.

† Postill in Domino Quint, post Epiphan.

induced to give his approval of the military contest of the Protestants with the emperor. The evangelical allies being defeated, the victorious army came to Halle, and the papers of Brenz, found in his residence there, fell into the hands of the Imperialists, and the Spanish bishops whom Charles had with him. Brenz was compelled to flee, first to a high tower in the city, and then when the burghers no longer ventured to protect him, to the fields and woods, amid the rigours of a severe winter, leaving his wife and children behind. He returned to Halle for a short time, but only to suffer fresh calamities, and was again compelled to flee. Ultimately he found a temporary hiding-place in the castle of Hohenwittlengen, at Urach. Here he wrote several treatises, subscribed "Joanne Witlingio Auctore," and amongst others an argument to show that "Anabaptists should not be killed."

*Treatise of
Brenz
against
killing Ana-
baptists.*

He maintains that though their errors are serious, they are not so formidable that they may not be overcome by sound and scriptural reasoning. The sword, he says, can have no power to convince, and the employment of violence will only tend to lend an attractive interest to the Anabaptists, who, whatever may be their unscriptural opinions in many cases, preserve a demeanour that gains for them respect, and that to persecute them will only create an interest in their mistaken views. It must also have the effect to confirm the Anabaptists in their opinions. But, independently of the impolicy of such a course, it is contrary to the principles and the spirit of the gospel. Overt acts of crime, for the preservation of

order in society, may be justly punished by the magistrate, but he has no right to take judicial cognizance of sentiments and opinions, or to enforce truth by pains and penalties.

Some of the Anabaptists held the theory of community of goods; and were in consequence regarded as a kind of monastic order. It was contended that, unless they were exterminated, there would be universal spoliation. In reply to this objection, Brenz insisted that no erroneous interpretation of Scripture, so long as the erroneous theory is not practically applied to the manifest injury of society, can become a proper object of magisterial punishment. If every incorrect interpretation of Scripture were deemed worthy of death, "whose neck," Brenz inquires, "would be safe?" As to spoliation of property, it will be time enough to visit the offence with punishment when it is perpetrated. If any of the Anabaptists desire to contribute their goods to a common store, it is by their own choice; the monks have done the same, only with this difference, that their rapacity as mendicants was suffered with impunity, when all classes of society suffered from its effects.*

Erasmus, as we know, had no disposition to become a martyr himself, and perhaps it may be added he had no great respect for the wisdom of any who hazarded their lives for the cause of truth. But it is pleasant to find that he did not approve of extending religion by fire and sword. It is true that he writes with his

Erasmus on
persecu-
tion.

* An magistratus jure possit occidere anabaptistas aut alios Hæreticos Joannis Wittlingii sententia. Bellius. p. 46, seq.

wonted caution, and in terms somewhat ambiguous, but he manifestly leans to the side of toleration. In his reply to the Inquisition he says :—

“When I consider the odiousness of heresy and schism, it seems hard that I cannot punish them by law; but on the other hand when I think with what gentleness Christ has planted, nourished, protected, and sustained his Church through many ages, I scarcely know how to defend the course of some who drag men to prisons and to the flame on account of their opinions.”

His difficulty in this respect is increased, he tells us, in view of the immoralities of the priests, who inflict these punishments.

“It is not for me,” he says, “either to approve or disapprove the laws of worldly rulers. They have their law, they have their councils, and their judge, to whom they must render an account. My position is this. If a person is candid, a worthy Christian, a person who has approved testimonials of character, and has conducted himself for many years to the satisfaction of the Church, for what is he to be taken to task? If he is to be corrected why are other delinquents spared? The origin of persecution shown from early history was not in any way creditable, and justly condemned by Augustine and the best of the fathers. The cruelties practised were revolting. On account of schism they injured people by throwing lime mixed with vinegar into their eyes. They plucked out the eyes of others, and in their madness killed many or drove them to suicide. Augustine did not approve of this desire for secular power in ecclesiastical matters. It did not become the elders, he said, to use other arms than those of prayers and the Word of God. If the evil should prove incurable he would have pronounced the anathema as the most extreme punishment in any case to be inflicted by the Church, and in this view he was justified by the example of Christ with his apostles and martyrs.”*

The Reformers who employed coercion against

* Erasmus in Supput. Err. Bedæ, Bellius. p. 75, *seq.*; Erasmus in responsione de Inquisitione. Bellius. p. 81, *seq.*

what they called the "sectaries," were by no means careful to maintain discipline within the Church. Bullinger says,* "If the ministers' lives be attached with *grievous vices*, and yet in the mean season they be faithful in teaching, admonishing, rebuking, exhorting, and comforting; if they lawfully distribute the lawful sacraments, *no man hath just occasion to forsake the Church.*"

Laxity of
discipline
in State
churches.

This extreme laxity, accompanied with its natural effects, called forth a class of opponents who asked with some reason, not where is the Church, but

Where are the Christians? In yielding to a spirit of morbid speculation, some reached the conclusion that the Church was of

Inquiry
made for
Christians.

purely ideal character, unassociated with any thing external, and not to be distinguished as a separate community by the most careful observation. They

admitted that in the times of the apostles Christian believers were manifestly separated from the world, and might then be recognized, but they maintained that it was

Morbid
opinions of
Schwenk-
feld and
Franck.

now no longer possible to form a society of really Christian persons. They were of opinion that Christians known to God existed everywhere, even in Turkey and in Pagan nations, where Christian truth was not known. They attached no practical importance, therefore, to Church organization, external worship, sacraments, or preaching. All men were alike to them, and all modes of worship. Though they could not with absolute certainty find a Christian anywhere, they came to an undoubted

* Decade, v. p. 56.

persuasion that the Reformers who persecuted them were *not* Christians. Beyond these negative conclusions they could not advance, leaving the light of revelation for the "sparks of their own kindling," they reached a point in which there was the nearest approach to ecclesiastical nonentity. Schwenkfeld and Sebastian Franck were the leaders of the party, though it is scarcely necessary to mention them, except for any who may want an exercise of patience in the analysis of mental and spiritual mist. Their peculiarities were diversified. Schwenkfeld held opinions respecting the humanity and the death of Christ of the most extraordinary kind: of Franck it is said that he allowed himself to believe nothing except on the united testimony of his own heart and conscience, and he professed subjection to no master but himself. In an early stage of his career Schwenkfeld influenced the mind of Leo Juda of Zurich in his views on the connection of the Church with the State, and on this subject wrote with clearness and consistency.

The State Church reformers appealed to the example of the Old Testament princes. In reply, Schwenkfeld said that such examples were never cited in the New Testament; that in Christendom the circumstances of magistrates had completely changed from what they were under the law; that in the Christian Church the temporal sword must not be relied on, "but the spiritual sword and the patience of the Holy God" must rule, that where faith working by love, is the ruling principle, unbelief and heresy are to be considered as spiritual evils, which can be

Schwenk-
feld on
State
Church.

hewn down by no sword, burnt by no fire, quenched by no water, restrained or warded off by no weapons. Originally Schwenkfeld held in general the opinion which was prevalent with all reformers, that the magistracy is as much an ordinance of God as the Church, and as a weighty and powerful member of the Church, has a real obligation to promote ecclesiastical interests. But the compulsory measures introduced by the State Church, and the persecution directed against his own person, estranged him for ever from State Church views and interests. He objected to the Protestants that they made "their magistrates gods," the Protestant divines particularly, that they took the secular authority for their own advantage of place. According to Schwenkfeld's opinion, the Protestant magistrate assumed too much; attacked the Son of God even in office, and confounded temporal and spiritual affairs. They placed themselves in God's place and in the kingdom of Christ's grace, "and allowed themselves to be betrayed to administer and to command where they have nothing to administer, nothing to command. It is in this way, he said, that Protestants have come to place their defence and trust in matters of belief no more only in the living God; "but in opposition to the Scriptures (Psalm cxlvi. to cxlviii.), in princes and children of men." "If they had not," Schwenkfeld continues, "given up religion to magistrates and wished to make them gods (would to God that they were good Christians); had not the magistrates ruled religion, from which followed the persecution of good pious people, with envy and hatred; had the preachers not sought

defence and protection from the magistrates and dissembled to them; had they not envied the Lord his glory, honour, and sovereignty; had they not taught the strengthening, defending, and upholding of the kingdom of Christ by carnal weapons and the arm of flesh; they would have escaped the sorrows and miseries which have come upon them. Eager to rule in things temporal and spiritual, they have been compelled to render homage to the civil power, and they have reason rather to lament than to boast of the enslaving alliance.”*

At a later period the case of the burning of Servetus, and the persecution borne by Castalio, led to further discussions of the rights of conscience. Castalio, driven from one place to another, became restless and extremely speculative. He rendered service, nevertheless, to the cause of freedom, by publishing quotations from the writings of the Reformers, on the subject of liberty of conscience, to shame them by the exposure of their inconsistencies.

Servetus
and Cas-
talia.

The case of JEAN BAPTISTE MORELY (Morellius), is more cognate to our main inquiry. Morellius published a treatise in 1562, entitled, “*Traicté de la Discipline et Police Chrestienne.*” In the dedication of the work to Viret, the author bespeaks the indulgence of the reader, because of the indisposition he had suffered, and which compelled him only to write at frequent intervals. As the work is little known we give the following abstract of its contents: Princes, he says, are ordained of God to institute and to maintain his true service. Besides the pure doctrine of the

Morellius.

* Shenkel, p. 157, *seq.*, p. 382, *seq.*

gospel, discipline ought to be restored in order to the preservation of the truth, and the salvation of men. With the neglect of discipline the doctrine of Christianity is lost. This reformation should not be neglected, because of the commands of God, the means He gives, and the hope of its accomplishment in our time. The model to which the Church should be restored is left to us by Christ and his apostles. Means are afforded to us by which this discipline may be restored, and all should be willing to submit to its practical enforcement. The Lord Jesus has imparted all gifts which are needful for its adornment and for its necessary government. The Church can neither cede its power nor be deposed of it.

Morellius discusses, at considerable length, questions connected with the rights and duties of the Church. The judgment of doctrines, he maintains, belongs to the Church, and the Word of God is a sufficient rule. He enters into many points of detail in reference to the removal of heresies and the use of excommunication.

"The Lord Jesus Christ," he says, "left the power to his Church to elect its ministers, so long as proper discipline was preserved. It was lost by degrees."

Various questions in relation to the equality of ministers, deacons, associations, charities, schools, libraries and histories, are freely discussed by Morellius, and the entire economy of the Church passes under his review.

In illustration of his style and train of thought, we cite a few passages from his work :—

“The gifts of the Church constitute the jewels with which it is adorned as a bride. To whom should it be permitted to corrupt its beauty by the mere semblance of sanctity, or to exchange it for imposing ceremonies and meretricious trifles, which may delight the senses, or openly to dispossess and to rob it by violence? For to allege that the Church had been led into error, and that she was not fit for self-government is not a sufficient reason. For who would be the thief who should excuse himself, by saying that he had despoiled her for her own advantage, of that the Master himself had provided.

“Neither the ordinances of God, nor his promises, are to be regarded as impossibilities. Where the Spirit of the Lord reigns there will be good order and all good conduct.

“But it may be objected that the Church now is not to be compared, either in knowledge or in the gift of the Spirit of God, with those who were of the time of the apostles. Now that I know, but I may reply in one word that the ordinances of God belong to all ages of his Church, to which He left his Holy Spirit (John xiv. ; Matt. xxiii.) for its counsellor and perpetual government. Nevertheless, I will cite an example which will refute every objection. The Church of the Corinthians, when they had lost the true usage of the Holy Supper (1 Cor. x. 21; 1 Cor. xi. 20); when contentious partiality and litigation reigned amongst enormous vices; when they transformed the preaching of the gospel into a mere rivalry of human eloquence, and denied openly the resurrection of the dead—that church was not, I may say, to be preferred before any amongst us now; and, nevertheless, St. Paul bears witness that they were not destitute of any spiritual gift, and while they waited for the manifestation of the Lord Jesus, they were so far from being spoiled of any gift of God that he admonished them to use excommunication, to explain the Scriptures and to exercise the right of election. Even he admonished the Church of the Galatians, who were fallen into Judaism, to reject all false teachers and pastors (1 Cor. v. ; 1 Cor. xiv. ; 1 Cor. xvi. ; Gal. i. 8 and 9). By which power he confirms to them the election of new and better pastors. But the Church, it is said, has given and transferred, for a long time, its own power to their bishops and ministers for good reasons, and now it tacitly approves of their authority, and is content with the present state of things. The

people made no such transfer. Their right remained untouched for many centuries. The usurpation of the bishops was gradual, until it became a horrible tyranny. The hierarchy was constituted, and each of the bishops sought to aggrandize himself. The name *clergy* was given to a faction to the opprobrium of the Church as the heritage—the peculiar of the Lord. Spoiled of her dowry she was left destitute and denuded under the name of the *laity*."

The sentiments advanced in the treatise of Morellius were submitted to the consideration of the Synod held at Orleans, 25th April 1562. Beza tells us: "Among other things, there was the summary of a book on ecclesiastical discipline, composed by a Parisian, named Morelli, in which, among other things, it is pretended that ecclesiastical elections ought to be conducted by all the people assembled together, each giving his voice, in place of (as is the case, where churches and consistories are already arranged) the election being conducted apart, after an examination as to doctrine and manners, by the ministers and elders, or else at the colloquies; which election, after being notified to the people, the latter are free either to confirm it, or, if need be, to carry it still further, viz., to the provincial or national Synod, so as to avoid intrigues and all confusion. There were other strange opinions touching the determination of doctrines; excommunication, and other points of ecclesiastical discipline contained in this book, which he had rashly caused to be printed at Lyons, and dedicated to Master Viret, as having approved it, the which was not at all true. This book, then, having been examined with the principal reasons thereof, and the author

Case of Morellius brought before the Synod at Orleans.

himself having been frequently heard, was finally condemned by the Synod as pernicious, and this was published from the pulpit in all the churches. Moreover, as the author would not acquiesce in this decisive condemnation, and thus notoriously caused a schism in the Church, he was cut off from the Supper of the Lord, by the Synod. It was also determined that the Church of Geneva should be made aware of all this, as Morellius had his family still there, and as he, having been made a burgess of that city, had written part of his book there.”*

Morellius returned to Geneva, and finding himself excluded from the Christian fellowship, he requested to be re-instated as a member of the church. A conference was granted, but with no satisfactory result. The ministers handed him over Morellius in Geneva. to the consistory, under the charge of Geneva. having affirmed: “That it is a pernicious thing, and contrary to the example of the apostles, that the ministers should have a council apart from the people.” Morellius, instead of appearing at the summons of the consistory, retired from Geneva, and sent a petition to the authorities of Geneva, for permission to visit that city, assigning as his reason that he was about to reside permanently in France, and desired, in the meantime, to be reconciled to the ministers and church in Geneva. He did not seek an interview with the ministers, and as the time approached for administering the Lord’s Supper, it became necessary to come to some decision in the case, lest he should present himself at the ordinance.

* *Histoire Ecclesiastique*, tome ii., p. 22, 1841.

Morellius had not a clear view of the proper beginning of a Christian society. His aim was to induce the national or provincial churches to manage their affairs according to the rule of Scripture. This would involve the general assembly of the churches, in a town or district, and the open discussion of matters as in a town council; but there was an approximation to Congregational order and sentiments broached, highly suggestive to other minds. Henry Jacob, who formed the Church in Southwark, in 1616, says of the scheme of Morellius, "Some of the *separation* I grant, are too offensive this way, which I am heartily sorry for. They take the words in Matt. xviii. 17, '*Tell the Church,*' more popularly than there is need, or than reason, or good order would. Howbeit in this they hold the substance of the true church government. They err but in the circumstance of order, that is, they will examine all scandals, or whatsoever in the presence, and under the judgment of the whole multitude, perpetually and necessarily. Wherein I wonder they see not the very many ill-consequences which will and must ensue many times."

Notwithstanding his undue and inconsistent concessions to the temporal power in matters of religion, Morellius deprecates the employment of force. We have abundant proof, he says, with respect to true religion, that the heart of a man who fears God cannot be forced by all the deaths that may be imagined. And in regard to those who are deceived by false religions the experience of many nations and peoples has shown that men are best drawn from superstition

and idolatry by gentle methods, and that the best planting of the truth of God is to preach the gospel. Heresies can only be effectually confuted by the Word of God. Constantine by the exercise of his imperial power did not create a multitude of Christians, but an infinite number of hypocrites.

In urging a speedy return to the primitive form of church polity, Morellius warns the churches that no discipline now exists amongst them that will promise a long continuance of the pure doctrine of the gospel, and that without some miraculous intervention of the divine power, they will inevitably fall into the abyss of error and impiety from which they were first delivered. Everything is tending to this in the apathy of the ministers, their want of piety and love of power. The Papacy is again silently but steadily advancing. Even the bishops after some slight and formal declaration of faith are invested with official power and entrusted with the revenues. They indulge in ostentatious pomp, introduce imposing ceremonies, and neglect to preach in the vulgar tongue. The people uninstructed, and amused with the religious performance, are unconscious of their spiritual destitution, and the way is prepared for the return of superstition. They have lost the power of discrimination in hearing the Word, and of course take no interest in the maintenance of the discipline, without which it is impossible that the truth can continue. In the most striking manner Morellius shows that the primitive church lost its purity, spirituality, and soundness in

Warns the churches of the consequences of neglecting discipline.

the faith by the neglect of proper scriptural discipline. He maintains, therefore, that its restoration is a matter of the first necessity. To encourage those who might shrink from the difficulties of the task, he reminds them of the words of the Saviour, "*Take my yoke upon you,*" and assures them that in accepting the "burden" of the Lord they would find in his promised grace all the strength required.

In reply to the objection :—"our manners are very different from the simplicity of the Christian Church." He replies the Church should ever retain its primal beauty and freshness. "The Word of the Lord endureth for ever." The covenant made with the patriarchs and prophets is renewed in every age. Christ, indeed, is not with us in the flesh, but He is ever present in his divinity, and by the power of his Spirit. We have the promises, the gifts and miracles of his grace.

Some expressed the fear that if the Church were restored to its original state of simplicity, it would become too democratic, and in consequence full of confusion. "Now I know," says Morellius, "that with a single word I can reply to such an objection. 'O man, who art thou that repliest against God?' Rom. ix. 20. Nevertheless, I go further, and deny that the government constituted by our Lord Jesus is a democracy, or popular state; for in such a state there are two signs of its corruption: the one that the people put themselves above the laws, and make, at their fancy, one decree after another; the other is, that there is no public council by which its affairs are con-

A Christian
Church not
a demo-
cracy.

ducted, but certain flatterers of the people who combine and plot amongst themselves to secure the adoption of measures by the people. Now in the Church of our Lord Jesus, the discipline and order she has received from Himself. For He is her king, legislator, prophet, and sovereign teacher. The ordinances He has appointed and the Word He has given have the place of a perpetual law; and I may add, that the removal of all the vices, all the differences in doctrine, and everything we have seen concerning the government, will neither add nor diminish from its substance and foundation. The council of the church, its pastors and rulers, elected by the members, prepare with care the business to be submitted for the approval of the brethren. This council consists of the wisest of their number, who have in them most of the fear of God, and are best conversant with Scripture. Everything is done decently and in order. The opinions of all are expressed freely; but with regard to the views of others. So that there is neither tumult nor division.

A meeting of Consistory was held on the 16th of August, 1563, at which Morellius attended.

After some preliminary questions, he laid upon the table a protest against their proceedings, in the course of which he affirmed his willingness to abide by the decision of Calvin, Farel, and Viret.

Morellius
condemned
by the
consistory.

Calvin replied for himself, that he could not consent to act the part of an arbiter above the Synod of France, or to alter anything which they had done, as this would be to assume powers to which he made no claim; and then he added, in the name of the

consistory, that Morellius having pretended to condemn and overturn the order of the Church as established, it belonged to him, as the assailant, to state what he thought to be amiss, and that they would then reply to what he might advance. Morellius declined this proposal, and submitted that it should be shown wherein he had erred, expressing his firm conviction that what he had set forth in his book was in accordance with the will of God.

The council resolved that at a meeting of the consistory they should enter into the matter of his book.

In the libel submitted to the consistory it was stated : " He pretends that the people has judgment in all that pertains to the government and polity of the Church, and if there are consistories, they can finally determine nothing either as to doctrine or manners, but can only report to the people to whom it belongs to judge.* Morellius requested that he might be allowed to make his defence in writing. To this request the council refused to accede, on the ground that he had a tongue and a mouth by which to speak, and that if he had time to write the book, he had had time to consider the whole subject."

He then asked for further time to consider carefully what might be advanced against him. This was sternly refused. " It was a great shame," said his antagonists, " to have so boldly affirmed on the sudden, and without due reflection, what tended to overturn (as he himself admitted) the polity of those churches which are at the present day the most

* Archiv. de Geneve.

reformed." Thus challenged Morellius defended himself with courage and skill, but the consistory decided against him, and demanded of him a recantation of the opinion libelled.

In reply, Morellius admitted that his book contained some "crudities;" expressed his regret that he should have issued it in so "rude" a state; but, at the same time avowed his adherence to the substance of the doctrines it contained, and reiterated his request to have time allotted to him, duly to ponder the arguments that had been advanced against him. This request the consistory treated as "frivolous," and proceeded to excommunicate him "as a schismatic, and a man given to contention."

A report of their proceedings in his case was drawn up and laid before the magistrates of Geneva, with a petition that they would deal with him "as reason required." Morellius fled from the city, and addressed a letter from Lyons to the Syndics of Geneva, in which he defended his own conduct, and complained of the harshness with which he had been treated by the consistory. This he transmitted through his wife, who appears to have remained behind in Geneva.

Unable to deal with Morellius in person, the rulers of Geneva resolved to proceed against him as far as they could, and to condemn his book. For His treatise prohibited. this purpose they convened, on the 26th of September, 1563, and proceeded religiously to their self-appointed duty, "having," as they are careful to record, "God and the Holy Scriptures before their eyes, and having invoked his holy name for the performing of right judgment, saying,—In the name

of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. After due deliberation, they unanimously resolved that Morellius should be regarded as guilty of contumacy, and proceeded against with the utmost rigour. He was accordingly outlawed, a sentence which subjected him to the punishment of death if again found within the canton of Geneva. His book was also denounced as heretical and dangerous. All booksellers were forbidden to retain it in their shops; all good citizens were enjoined not to buy it or to keep it, and those who happened to possess a copy were requested to deliver it up to the magistrates, that it might be destroyed.

Morellius still sought to reconcile himself with the French Church. At the synod held at Paris on the 25th of December, 1565, his case was brought before the assembled brethren, and mention is made of his having had divers conferences with ministers upon the subject of his book and other writings. The synod complain that, notwithstanding all remonstrances and admonitions, he "still persisted in his assertion, saying that he is persuaded those, his opinions, are built upon God's holy Word." At the same time, in "the hope that the Lord would be gracious to him," and because he did "not differ from the Church in any of the fundamental articles of the faith," they resolved that he should be received into peace and communion, upon condition of his signing a pledge that in time to come he would carry himself peaceably, submitting to the order and discipline of the Church, and neither by mouth nor pen publishing any of those opinions for which he had been called in question;

upon condition, also, of his satisfying the Seignorie and Church of Geneva, and being reconciled with them.”* There is reason to believe that Morellius declined to submit to these terms, for it appears that he wrote and published an answer to a work which had been prepared by the learned Sadeel,† under the auspices of the Synod of France, entitled “*De la Confirmation de la Discipline*,” the object of which was to defend the order established in their Church.

The discussion of this question of Congregational right so sternly suppressed could not stand alone, although we are unable to trace its influence. The atmosphere of religious thought, both on the Continent and in England, was more or less affected by it.

* Quick Synodicon in Gallia Reformata, vol. i. 56; Aymon Actes Ecclesiastiques et Civiles des Synodes des Eglises Reformes en France, tom. i.

† Quick Synodicon in Gallia Reformata, vol. i. 121. Dr. Alexander. Switzerland and the Swiss Churches.

CHAPTER XXIII.

Escape of Protestants from England, 1552. EIGHT HUNDRED Protestants left the shores of England during the Marian persecution, in the hope of finding a place of refuge on the Continent. The door of escape was providentially opened for them in the religious peace concluded at Passau (July 16th, 1552), followed by the settlement of matters at the Diet of Augsburg. The right to reform the Church was conceded to the Imperial States, and protection was guaranteed to all who adhered to the Augsburg Confession. Germany was at length free from the temporal dominion of Rome, and a band of weary exiles might now pass through the country without the fear of violence or pillage incident to a state of war.

John A'Lasco and his congregation embark for Denmark. It was difficult, however, for the Protestants in England to get away, for the vessels were closely watched, and spies were employed at the ports to detect the fugitives who might attempt to flee in disguise. John A'Lasco embarked, September 15th, 1553, at Gravesend, with one hundred and seventy-five individuals, who resolved to follow their pastor, and share his fate. The ship in which they embarked

entered the port of Elsinore, in Denmark. The king granted him a favourable audience; but Novoringus, his chaplain, a zealous Lutheran, succeeded in changing the mind of the monarch. The congregation of A'Lasco were told that the king would suffer Papists rather than them in his dominions. They were welcomed in Friesland; the princes went out to meet them, and gave them permission to have churches of foreigners at Embden—one for English and another for French refugees. A company of exiles were repulsed by the Lutherans at Wesel, but they obtained a settlement.

Refugees
repulsed by
Lutherans.

The main body of French refugees from England, under the care of Valeran Pullain, were established at Frankfort, and prepared the way for the reception of an English congregation in that city. The writer of the "Brieff discours of the troubles begonne at Franckford," says that on the day following that of their arrival (June 27th, 1554) they communed with *Master Morellio*, another minister of the French Church, and also with *Master Castallio*, a senior of the same (both of them learned and godly men). By their advice and counsel it was determined that a supplication should be drawn out and offered to the magistrates, to know, first, whether they would be contented that not only the parties before named, but also all Englishmen that would repair thither for the like cause, might, through their favour, be suffered safely to remain within their city. This supplication was subscribed as well by Sutton, Whittingham, and the rest of the Englishmen; as also by Morellio, Castallio, and one Adrian, a citizen there with whom they lodged; and within three

days after the offering up of their supplication they obtained their requests." Other English exiles from different places on the Continent joined them, and amongst their number the leaders of a zealous Episcopalian party, who insisted on the use of a liturgy. A controversy arose which led to the formation of the Puritan party, who, under the care of Knox and Whittingham, separated and removed to Geneva. The correspondence which arose on the occasion fills a considerable volume; but though interesting in its nature, as it belongs rather to the oft-repeated story of the formation of the Anglican Church, need not occupy our attention. Three grand parties—the Episcopalian, the Puritan, and that of the Romish—entered into a sharp contest to obtain the prize before them in the endowments, patronage, and power of a national church. It was of vital importance to the Episcopalian leaders that they should reach the scene of action as speedily as possible.

Three parties contend for ecclesiastical supremacy.

Sandys, in a letter to Bullinger, dated from "Strasburg, December 20th, or if you choose 21st, 1558," writes: "We yesterday received a letter from England, in which the death of Mary, the accession of Elizabeth, and decease of Cardinal Pole is confirmed. Sir Thomas Wroth, Sir Anthony Cook, and other persons of distinction *have begun their journey this day*. I, with God's blessing, shall follow them to-morrow. As soon as I arrive in England, I will take care to let you know the state of affairs." The elements were unpropitious to these ambitious churchmen.

Return of exiles to England, 1558.

John Jewell, in a letter to Peter Martyr, January 26th, 1559, says: "It was with some difficulty that on the fifth day after, we arrived at Strasburg. Here we found all our friends in good health, and very anxious for your company. We have not yet heard what Sandys, Horn, and other friends have been doing in England; nor indeed is it to be wondered at, for having left Strasburg on the 21st of December, they would hardly be able to reach Antwerp in twenty days after, because the Rhine being frozen over would prevent their travelling by water. All we hear is that their return was very acceptable to the queen, and that she has openly declared her satisfaction. *Bishoprics will shortly become very cheap. There are at this time no less than fourteen sees vacant.* The queen has forbidden any person, whether Papist or gospeller, to preach to the people."

Letter of
Jewell to
Martyr,
1559.

The Puritan party were distanced by their Episcopalian opponents. They lost time in vain efforts to obtain reconciliation with their former companions in exile, and on their return they soon found themselves excluded from the hierarchical Establishment, and silenced as preachers by the imposition of terms of conformity, to which they could not in conscience submit. They had many friends in the Lower House of Parliament, and not a few warm sympathizers in the Lords of the Congregation in Scotland; but for the time they were humiliated and subjected to severe restraints. Gilby complains that those who shared with them the sorrows of banishment, "being now fatted with promotion, honour, and wealth, and

Puritans
distanced
by their
opponents.

looking only to their present estate, and blinded with estimation of themselves," desire only to "please those who were high in authority." In a letter to Bullinger, July, 1566, Lawrence Humphrey and Thomas Simpson say: "We have always thought well of the bishops; we have put a candid interpretation upon their display of grandeur, why cannot they endure us who formerly bore the same cross with them, and who now preach the same Christ, and bear that most delightful yoke together with themselves? Why do they cast us into prison? Why do they persecute us on account of the habits? Why do they spoil us of our property and means of subsistence? Why do they publicly traduce us in their books?"

Complaints
of Puritan
leaders,
1566.

The Anglican bishops answered these appeals and remonstrances with more stringent measures of repression. Bullinger was the oracle of the Anglican clergy, and acting on his system they obtained laws for graduated punishments according to the zeal and activity of those who maintained opinions contrary to their own.

The friends of the Puritan party in Parliament protested against the tyranny of the bishops, much to the displeasure of the queen. The Spanish ambassador, writing to Philip, October 26th, 1566, says:—

The queen
in a rage,
1566.

"The members of the Lower House are all Protestants, and seeing the queen in such a rage at them, I took occasion to point out to her the true character of this new religion, which will endure no rule, and will have everything at its own pleasure without regard to the sovereign authority; it was time for her to see these things, and I bade her observe the contrast between these

turbulent heretics and the quiet obedience of her Catholic subjects. She said she could not tell what the devil they were after. '*They want liberty, madam,*' I replied, 'and if princes do not look to themselves, and work in concert to put them down, they will find before long what all this is coming to.' She could not but agree with me."

Quadra saw, in the case of the Roman Catholics, the incongruity of coercion :—

"Neither," he writes to Alva, "the heretics of our time, nor the persecutors of old, ever ventured on so complete a piece of devilry, never, I think was so monstrous an iniquity committed. To force a man to do a thing against his will may be unjust, but there may be some reason in it, but to force a man to understand a thing in the sense in which the sovereign understands it, is too absurd to be called either just or unjust."*

Conspiracy
of the
Romish
party
against the
Govern-
ment.

The Romish party, however, did not confine their resistance to the utterance of indignant protest. They meant to overturn the Government. Don Gueran de Espes, a Spanish prisoner, says in a letter to the Duke of Alva :—

"The Duke of Norfolk and Lord Arundel, with the assistance of our common friend, Ridolfi, have contrived means of communicating with me by cipher. They mean to make an end of the present infamous government, to place the administration of the Catholics, and compel the queen to go along with them. Your excellency they trust will approve, and they hope this realm will not lose the friendship of the king our master. They say that they will establish the Catholic religion; there never was a more favourable opportunity, and Cecil, who imagines that he has all under his feet, will find himself left without a friend."

Letter of
Espes to
Alva.

To Philip of Spain Don Gueran writes :—

"The Catholics are arming under cover of an order from the

* Simancas MS., Froude.

queen for the equipment of the musters. The interruption of the trade will suffice of itself to cause a revolution. Care is only necessary that no untoward accident occurs."

The Court of Rome was constantly occupied in devising plans for regaining its power in England. The Pope (Pius IV.) wrote to the queen in the following terms :—

Letter of the Pope to Elizabeth. "Dearest daughter in Christ,—Health and apostolical benediction. How much the salvation of your soul, the honour of your reign, and the interest of your kingdom is desired by us, is known to God, the searcher of hearts, and may be understood in some measure by the instruction which our Nuncio Vicentio Parpalia, a person of fidelity, and not unknown to your majesty, has orders to lay before you. We earnestly exhort your highness, dearest daughter, that you would be no longer governed by unhappy advisers, by men who love nothing but their interest and pleasures. We entreat you, therefore, to give the fear of God the principal sway in your councils; to know the time of your visitation, and to resign to the admonitions of us your spiritual father. Your majesty may promise to yourself any reasonable length of compliance which lies within the compass of my station, not only with reference to your spiritual advantage, but likewise for the service and security of your royal dignity. And when you return to the communion of the Church, as we hope you will, you shall be received with the same marks of affection and regard as the father in the gospel entertained his son at his coming home. Though our satisfaction will be much greater than that mentioned in the parable, for there the joy was only for the recovery of a single person, whereas your highness's return will draw your subjects' happiness along with you, and give a strong occasion of pleasure to the Universal Church; and besides, heaven itself will be, as it were, transported with the news, and you will make an addition to the joys of the blessed. Such a glorious recollection will raise your character, prove serviceable to your memory, and give you a much brighter crown than that you wear already. But concerning this affair,

my agent, Vicentio, shall discourse with your highness more at large, and give you further proof of our paternal affection.

“Dated at Rome, May the 5th, 1560.”*

On the same day his Holiness wrote letters to Ferdinand, King of Hungary, to Philip of Spain, and to the Spanish Ambassador, the Bishop of Aquila, urging them to exert their influence to “re-duce England once more to union with the Church” of Rome.

Parpalia, “Abbot of S. Salute” was employed on this special mission. He arrived at Brussels in the middle of June, and there waited the result of the efforts made at the English court to gain permission for him to come on the business of his legation. Becoming impatient with the delay, he wrote a letter to the queen, September 8th, 1560, in which he says he has little hope of the result of his embassy, because the Catholic bishops and other ecclesiastics have been thrown into prison, though it was no part of his mission to excite the Catholics to tumult. In the meanwhile letters were received from John Sheres and Throckmorton, English agents employed by Cecil to watch the movements of the party, to apprise the court that it was the intention of the S. Salute to stir up the “favourers” of the Pope in England, and in the event of the non-compliance of the queen he was directed to proceed further with censures or curse of the Church and to denounce her as a rebel.

The envoy failed in his mission, and writing to the queen from Orleans, November 28th, 1560,

* B. O, Foreign MS. Calender of State Papers. Stevenson,

Embassy
of Abbot
S. Salute.

Throckmorton says: "The Abbot of S. Salute returned from Brussels by this route to Rome.

He had conference with the Cardinal of Lorraine, of your majesty, and, as I understand, made him a very lewd discourse of your majesty, of your religion, of the fruits thereof, and of your proceedings. He tarried here eight days, and departed hence towards Rome."*

Failure of
his mission,
Nov. 28th,
1560.

Notwithstanding the mortification felt by the disappointed legate, it was resolved by the Papal Court that a second embassy should be appointed. In order that the mission might be more propitious, Sheres writes, November 23rd,

Renewal of
the project.
Procession
of cardinals,
1560.

1560: "The Pope, the cardinals, and all the clergy will go *barefooted* in procession to pray that all such as are separated from the Church may return again of the same." This resolution, we learn from a subsequent letter (December 7th), was not carried out strictly. Whether because the weather was too cold, or that some of the Sacred College were in delicate health, we are not informed; but it was arranged, no doubt to the comfort of the cardinals, that in the procession they should *not* go barefooted, but with *white hose*.

The Abbot of Martinengro was sent in the following spring, on the pretext of requesting the queen to send representations to the Council of Trent. He was careful to apprise the court that he should make no commotion, keep strictly private, and take an oath not to say or do anything to endanger the throne. The Council met at Greenwich,

Mission of
Martinengro
peremptorily
refused.

* R. O. MSS.

May 5th, 1860, and resolved unanimously, that the proposed embassy should be finally and peremptorily refused. The Spanish Ambassador, in the hope of obtaining a more favourable reply, had a personal audience with the queen next day; but she gave him no hope, and simply read to him the written reply of the Council. Further attempts were made by the agents of the Pope in the same direction for more than a year.

Council at
Greenwich,
May 5th,
1860.

In February, 1562, we find the Cardinal of Ferrara entreating the queen to retain the cross and the candles on the altar, and Throckmorton at the same time writes to inform the court that the objects of the Court of Rome were not abandoned.

Whilst similar negotiations were pending, the severities of the High Court of Commission in 1566, *drove* some of the Puritan leaders to *separation*. It is most interesting to observe throughout the intense desire of the people who had met for worship in the time of the Marian persecution to hear the gospel. They hailed with delight the reappearance of Evangelical preachers, and attended in crowds the service at Paul's Cross. Six or seven thousand persons joined with the utmost fervour in singing on such occasions. Some of the Protestant exiles during the reign of Mary escaped to Scotland, and disseminated the truth, sheltered by their obscurity. John Knox, in a secret visit to Edinburgh, writes to his mother in Geneva, to tell her that he cannot return home immediately, because of the intense desire to receive the Word:—

Puritans
driven to
separation,
1566.

Spirit of
hearing in
the people.

“Albeit my journey towards Scotland, belovit mother, was

maist contrarious to my awn judgment, befor I did interpryse the same: yet this day I prais God for thame wha was the cause externall of my resort to theis quarteris; that is, I prais God in yow and for yow, whome hie maid the instrument to draw me frome the den of my awn eas (you allane did draw me from the rest of quyet studie) to contemplat and behald the fervent thirst of oure brethrene, night and day sobbing and gronyng for the breid of lyfe. Gif I had not sene it with my eis, in my awn contry, I culd not have belevit it: I praisit God, when I was with you, perceaving that in the middis of Sodome God had mo Lottis than one, and ma faithfull dochteris than tua. But the fervencie heir dioth far exceid all utheris that I have seen, and thairfoir ye sall paciently bear, altho' I spend heir yet sum dayis, for depart I cannot unto sic tyme as God quenche their thirst a litill. Yea, mother, their fervencie dioth sa ravische me, that I can not but accus and condemp my sleuthfull coldnes. God grant thame thair hartis desyre."

In France the same spirit of hearing was manifest. The people met in small bands and in obscure places, under all risks to listen to the "glad tidings" of salvation. John Venables, a man in humble life, went from Geneva to Dieppe with a pack of books, and so interested the people in secret that a church was formed in that place, subsequently visited by John Knox.* The eagerness of the people to hear the gospel, who had received the truth in the Marian time was not less in England. They remonstrated with the Puritan ministers, who remained timidly silent, hesitating to seek further reformation.

"Since," says William White, "neither the prophets, Christ, his apostles, nor any true preacher, through entreaty, flattery, or tyranny, *were made to surcease from preaching*, or to frame their doctrine according to their fancy; therefore my hope is, you will not, but boldly (after the example of all the godly) as you have began, go FORWARD, sincerely, plainly, and simply in the truth of God's gospel. *I, with my brethren, do earnestly desire of you,*

Silenced
Puritans
urged to
preach.

* Quick's MSS.

and most earnestly pray to God for you, that you may faithfully, with the sword of God's Word, cut up all antichrists' remnants, and men's inventions, that the gospel being rightly planted, may take an everlasting root among us and our posterity to the glory of God, the increase of his kingdom, the discharge of your conscience, and the everlasting salvation of all his elect, which He will bring to pass for his crucified Jesus His sake, to whom with the Holy Ghost, be all glory, now and for evermore."

In their secret meetings supplications like the following might be heard, interrupted with sighs and mingled with tears :—

"O Almighty God, great Judge of all, Father of mercy, and loving Lord of thy flock and congregation : we do acknowledge thy goodness, through which Thou hast vouchsafed to choose and call us into the society of the saints, Prayer for relief and help. the fellowship of Thine elect, the fold of thy sheep, wherein always Thou hast dealt with us in all things, as with Thine own inheritance, thy chosen sheep. For this thy great kindness we do yield to Thee our most humble and hearty thanks. We do confess also, that on our behalf for want of due consideration of this thy goodness, and our duties, we have grievously offended Thee, not only in unthankful using thy benefits, but also in wilful and sinful abusing thy mercy.

"To holy assemblies we have joined ourselves in the exercise of thy word and sacraments, of prayer and charity, yet not with such zeal and diligence as we ought, but with that loathsomeness and contempt which we ought not. In coming to them daily we have filled our fancy, rather than fed our faith, we have come to them more of custom than of conscience ; we have heard much more with our ears than we digested in our minds, and then with hard hearts, hearing much, doing little, promising fair, performing nothing in effect, we have remained uncorrected, not amended, to the great offence of thy divine majesty. Of thy displeasure kindled heretofore against us, we have been divers ways admonished. For even as Thou didst leave a remnant of the Canaanites, not cast out from amongst thy people Israel, to be snares, whips, and thorns in their sides and eyes, because they did not fully cleave unto Thee, so do the remnants of the Romish

abomination stick still amongst us, to witness thy wrath against our cold love of sincere serving Thee, and yet is not our zeal inflamed to better. The sharp scourges which we have seen and felt, together with strange signs showed in heaven and earth, have testified Thine anger against us, but we, earth and ashes, are not yet taught our good.

“The ministers of thy Word, seeing our sinful state, have severely threatened greater plagues to fall on us; but we have trifled of our time, and not heartily turned unto Thee. And therefore it is, that even now we see, as a beginning of greater vengeance, their hearts, whose power should procure the correction of our mischief, not only hold in neglect and contempt of that they should do, but bent also to maintain that they should destroy, to the hindering of the course of thy gospel which they should set forward.

“Are not the relics of Romish idolatry stoutly retained; are we not bereaved of some of our pastors who, by word and example, sought to free thy flock from these offences. Oh, good Lord, these are now by power put down from pastoral care, they are forbid to feed us, their voice we cannot hear. This is our great discomfort; this is the joy and triumph of Antichrist his limbs our enemies; yea, and that is more heavy increase of this misery is, of some threatened of the wicked hoped for, and of us feared, as thy just judgment against us for our sins.

“And now, Lord, what can we say. Confusion of faces is ours. We have sinned and done amiss. We confess our fault. As justice is Thine, so mercy is Thine also, to pardon and to help the miserable. We, persuaded of thy goodness towards us in Jesus Christ, do know that of love Thou dost now chastise us as children. Correct us, O Lord; but not in thy wrath. Remember thy loving-kindness, and in the riches of thy great mercy, pardon and forgive all our sins, through which, we have thus offended Thee. O Lord, blot them out of thy remembrance, by the blood of thy Son Jesus; and let thy good Spirit now transform us from our old evils, so that we commit them no more in thy holy sight; but rule us to grow in regeneration that this our mortal life may bring forth plentifully more fruits of the Spirit which do please Thee. O heavenly Father, stay thy stroke now begun. Restore our helps to us again. Yea, of thy liberal goodness, give more of such aid and help, as Thou

knowest needful, to work the thorough reformation of our state, generally, and of each one of us, particularly.

“Much good hast Thou wrought unto us by our sovereign, and the ministers whom Thou hast appointed to government. Do not withdraw thy grace from them for our sins’ sake, but rather increase thy good gifts in them, for thy mercy’s sake. Endue them with increase of knowledge, zeal, and diligence, that they may do that which is to be done *to give thy glorious gospel the full course*, so that by its perfect establishment, may be wrought of thy religion in sincerity, and of civil regiment in peace and equity. Look, Lord and Judge most just, on the proud bragg and boast of Antichrist, Thine enemy. Cut his courage, confound his counsel, disappoint his hope, break his power, and give him that overthrow, that there do not remain so much as a memory, or token of him, to be had in regard; but that his memory may be had in confusion. O Lord, set up thy glory, remove thy wrath, restore thy mercy, comfort Thine afflicted, turn thy loving countenance to us, pour forth thy grace on us, build us up in Christ, and love us still. Let the trumpet of thy gospel with such power and plenty be blown, that all flesh may hearken, and yield thereto Thine elect to their comforts; the reprobates to their confusion. And let this blast continue without ceasing, with due effect, until that last trump be sounded by Thine archangels at the day of Christ, and come, Lord Jesus. In thy name, O Christ our captain, we ask these things, and pray unto Thee, O heavenly Father, saying, ‘Our Father,’ etc. O Lord, increase our faith, whereof we make confession: ‘I believe in God,’ etc. Arise, O Lord, and let Thine enemies be confounded. *Let them understand that against Thee they fight.* Let them flee from thy presence, that hate thy godly name. Let the groans of thy afflicted enter in before Thee. And, for thy name’s sake, wash away all dregs of Popery and superstition that presently trouble the state of thy Church, and preserve the vine which thy right hand hath planted, that the glory of Thine anointed, Jesus Christ our Lord, may clearly shine here and before all nations. So be it.”*

A few of the Puritan preachers were emboldened to care for the people, and continued to preach

* Old Tract, 1566, in the spelling of the time.

privately. A company of persons met in this way in Plumbers' Hall, in the City of London, and were surprised by the authorities on the 19th of June, 1567. Their leaders, Mr. Hawkins, William White, Thomas Rowland, John Smith, William Nixon, James Ireland, and Richard Morecraft, were, after an examination before the High Commission, committed the next day to the Bridewell prison. The particulars of their arrest and detention *as a Puritan party* are well known; but for three centuries the fact of the advancement of a few of their number to the point of *voluntary separation*, and the deliberate assertion of their right on scriptural authority to unite themselves in Christian fellowship as a Congregational Church, and to choose their own officers, pastor, and deacons, was not disclosed. The evidence of this important and deeply interesting fact is furnished in three simple documents it was our good fortune to find in a bundle of miscellaneous and uncalendered manuscripts in the State Paper Office. The first is a small paper printed in black letter to the following effect :

Meeting at
Plumbers'
Hall, June
19th, 1567.

Ministers
and people
committed
to Bride-
well.

Voluntary
separation.

Formation
of a Con-
gregational
Church.

Documen-
tary evi-
dence.

"THE TREWE MARKES OF CHRISTE'S CHURCH, ETC.

"The order of the Pryve Churche in London, which, by the malice of Satan, is falselie slaundred and evell spoken of.

"The myndes of them, that by the strengthe and workings of the Almighty, our Lord Jesus Christe, have set their hands and hartes to the pure, unmingled, and sincere worshippinge of God, accordinge to his blessed and glorious worde in all things onely, abolishinge and abhorringe all tradicions and inventions of man,

whatsoever in the same religion and service of oure Lord God, knowinge this alwayes, that the trewe and afflicted Church of our Lorde and Savyoure Jesus Christe, eyther hathe, or else ever more continually under the crosse stryveth for to have.

“FYRSTE and formoste, *the glorious worde and evangell preached, not in bondage and subjection, but freely and purely.*

“SECONDLY, to have *the Sacraments mynistred purely onely and all together according to the institution and good worde of the Lorde Jesus, without any tradicion or invention of man*; and

“LASTE of all to have *not the fylthye cannon lawe, but disciplyne onelye, and altogether agreeable to the same heavenly and Almighty Worde of oure good Lorde Jesus Chryste.*

“RICHARDE FYTZ, Minister.”

The second document is an original manuscript, containing an earnest protest against the superstitions of the Church of Rome and the tyranny practised in the support of them, with the following interesting statement:—

“Therefore, according to the saying of the Almighty our God, Matt. 18, v. 20, when ii or iii are gathered in my name ther am I. So we a poore congregation whom *God hath separated* from the Churches of England and from the mingled and faulse worshipping therein used, out of the which assemblies the Lord our onely Saviour hath called us, and still calleth, saying come out from among them and separate yourselves from them, and touch no unclene thing, then will I receive you, and I wilbe your God and you shall be my sonnes and daughters, sayth the Lord. So as God giveth strength at this day we do serve the Lord every *Saboth day in houses*, and on the fourth day in the weke we meet or cum together weekely to use *prayer and exercise disciplyne* on them which do deserve it, by the strength and sure warrant of the Lord's good word. . . . So this secrete and disguysed antechrist, to wit, this Cannon Law with the branches and their mainteyners, though not so openly, have *by longe imprisonment pined & killed* the lords sarvants (as *our minister Richard Fitz, Thomas Rowland, deacon*, one Partryche and Gyles Foulter) and besydes them a great multitude . . . whose good cause and faythfull testimony though we should cease to grone and crye unto our God to redresse such wronges and cruell handelynges

of his pore members, the very walles of the prisons about this Citye, as the Gatehouse, Brydewell, the Counters, the Kyngs benche, the Marcialty (Marshalsea), the Whyte Lyon, would testifye God's anger kyndlyed against this land for such injustice and subtyll persecucion."

And concludes with a prayer for the queen :—

" Thus, O Lord, graunt that her highnesse may not onely have a blessed, longe, and prosperous reygne, with peace of conscience in this lyfe, but also in the lyfe to cum, her highnesse may enjoye, by the merites and death of Christ Jesus our onely Saviour, lyfe everlastyng, to whome with the Father and the Holy Ghost be all honour and glory for ever and ever. Amen.

" In White Chappel Streete—

Joane Abraham.

Constance Foxe.

Eliz. Slacke.

Annes Hall.

Mary Race.

Helene Stokes.

Eliz. Balfurth.

Sara Cole.

Harry Sparowe.

John Kyng.

James Awbynes.

Ihon Leonarde.

George Haies.

Ihon Thomas.

Annes Evance.

Elizabeth Leanord.

Joane Ireland.

Jasper Westton.

Marten Tilmans.

Ihon Davy.

Odye Borre.

Elizabeth Hill.

Joane Havericke.

Mary Wever.

Abraham Foxe.

Mary Mayer.

Eliz. Rummey.

The third document (an original manuscript), is the declaration by a member of the Church of his reasons for separation, and the renunciation of the "reliques of Antchryste." Amongst other reasons the following are given :—

"BECAUSE of God's commandment to go forewarde to perfection, Heb. vi. 1; 2 Cor. vii. 1; Ps. lxxxiv. 7; Ephes. iv. 15.

"Also to avoid them, Rom. xvi. 17; Ephes. v. 11; 1 Thess. v. 22.

"BECAUSE they are abominations before the Lorde our God, Deut. vii. 25, 26, xiii. 17; Ezek. xiv. C.

"BECAUSE I would not communicate with other menne sinnes, 2 John v. 9—11; 2 Cor. vi. 17. Touch no unclean thyng.

"THEY GIVE OFFENCES both to the preacher and the hearers, Rom. xvi. 17; Luke xvii. 1.

"THEY GLAD AND STRENGTHEN THE PAPISTS in their errour, and greve the godlie, Ezek. xiii. 21, 22. Note this 21 verse, etc.

"THEY DOO PERSECUTE our Saviour Jesus Christ in his members, Actes ix. 4, 5; 2 Cor. i. 5.

"ALSO THEY REJECT AND DESPYSE OUR LORDE AND SAVIOUR JESUS CHRIST, Luke x. 16.

"MOREOVER, those labourers, whom *at the prayer of the faithful*, the Lord hath sent furth into his harvests, they refuse and also reject, Matt. ix. 38.

"God geve us strength styl to stryve in suffryng undre the crosse, that the *blessed Worde of our God may onely rule*, and have the highest place, to cast downe strong holdes, to destroy or overthrow policies or imaginations, and every high thyng that is exalted against the knowledge of God, and to bryng in to captivitie or subjection every thought to the obedience of Christ, etc., 2 Cor. x. 4, 5. That the name and worde of the eternall our Lorde God, may be exalted or magnified above all thynges, Ps. cxxxviii. 2."

These documents are endorsed, "Bishop of London, Puretaness," and were no doubt seized by the officers when the members of the church were taken to the Bridewell prison.

Mr. Benjamin Scott, the present Chamberlain of London, has now the sole jurisdiction over committals to that prison, and was so interested in these documents that he caused extracts from them to be printed and freely circulated amongst the ministers and delegates of the Congregational Union at their autumnal meeting held in Sheffield in 1866, with a suggestion that the year 1867 would afford the opportunity, never again to recur, of cele-

Tercenary of English Congregationalism.

brating the tercentenary of English Congregationalism.

The following resolution also was passed unanimously at the north-western district meeting of the Surrey Congregational Union, held at Egham, on Wednesday, the 26th of September, 1866, upon the motion of Benjamin Scott, Esq., F.R.A.S., seconded by J. Remington Mills, Esq., M.P.; and ordered by the general committee of the said Union, meeting on the 4th of October, 1866, at York Road Chapel, Lambeth, to be forwarded to the secretary of the Nonconformist Memorial Hall Committee, accompanied by explanatory documents:—

“Resolved,—That the ensuing year (A.D. 1867), being the three hundredth anniversary of the constitution (A.D. 1567) of Richard Fitz’s Church in the Bridewell of the City of London—the *first church of the Congregational order* at the English Reformation of which we have information—presents an occasion for celebrating the tercentenary of English Congregationalism, which should not be permitted to pass unimproved;

“That such proposed celebration, the occasion for the like of which will not recur for a century, presents a favourable opportunity for the study of our distinctive ecclesiastical principles, for comparing them with the New Testament, and for commending them anew, after three hundred years’ experience, to the notice of our fellow-countrymen;

“That the 20th of June, 1867, and the Sunday next following thereto, be particularly devoted to the proposed object, the company of Richard Fitz—the proto-martyr of English Congregationalism—having been committed to the Bridewell on the 20th of June, 1567.”

The site of the Bridewell prison at one time was available for the erection upon it of the Nonconformist Memorial Hall, and because of the convenience of the locality and its historical associations, Mr. Scott earnestly recommended that it should be

obtained. Though a degree of disappointment must be felt that these judicious suggestions were not adopted, it will always excite a feeling of satisfaction that the ter-
centenary of Congregationalism did not pass altogether without recognition. It might, however, have been turned to account with great advantage to our distinctive principles.

Site of the
Bridewell
prison.

It should cause no surprise that the proposition to hold a commemorative service met with no general response. In the incidents submitted to the notice of the assembly, there was nothing to strike attention at the first glance, no more than in the circumstance that a meeting was held at the house of Lydia, at Philippi, when two ministers, just liberated from prison, formed the first Christian Church in Europe. It is in the entire absence of all external accessories of interest, that the moral sublimity of the incident consists. Here were met a company of persons, separated from their homes and families, languishing in prison, and it may be pinched with hunger. Some of their number were enfeebled with sickness, lying on a pallet of straw. A light shone upon them from heaven. They read that Scripture, "Upon this rock I will build my Church," "*Other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ,*" "One is our Master," they had to say, "and we are 'brethren.' Christ in spiritual things is our only Lawgiver and King; His Word our only rule; His Spirit our Teacher and Guide. Let us unite in the confession of His name, and enter into a covenant to serve Him

First
Separatist
Church.

as a Church, to make known his truth and to extend his peaceful reign." Richard Fitz, with his dying hand, sketched their simple "Order." From that day until now churches of the same order have been planted, in their early history, amidst the bitter hatred of all parties, and severe persecution. They took root in the shade and grew amidst the storm. In an age of more than Egyptian darkness and bondage these humble pioneers for truth and freedom passed in single file through the gory path of martyrdom to open the way for advancing millions to the enjoyment of blessings that secure the highest advantages for time, and lead to the glorious inheritance of eternity. What a course will be opened to the future historian, who, taking his point of departure from the iron gates of the Bridewell prison, in 1567, shall trace the long succession of faithful witnesses, the wonderful march of events, and mark the marvellous influence excited in Christian civilization from the simple and holy principles then distinctly enunciated. After that survey of three centuries, it will be said with new meaning and greater emphasis,

Three
centuries
of growth. "Thou hast brought a vine out of Egypt;
Thou hast cast out the heathen and planted
it. Thou preparedst room before it, and
didst cause it to take deep root, and it filled the
land. The hills were covered with the shadow of
it, and the boughs thereof were like the goodly
cedars. She set out her boughs unto the sea, and
her branches unto the river."

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